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THE

WORKS

OF THE

Rev. JOHN WESLEY, M.A.

Late Fellow of *Lincoln-College*, OXFORD.

VOLUME IV.

BRISTOL:

Printed by WILLIAM PINE, in *Wine-Street*.

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SERMON XLVIII.

SELF-DENIAL.

LUKE ix. 23.

And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

1. IT has been frequently imagined, that the direction here given, related chiefly, if not wholly to the apostles: at least to the Christians of the first ages, or those in a state of persecution. But this is a grievous mistake: for although our blessed Lord is here directing his discourse more immediately to his apostles, and those other disciples who attended him in the days of his flesh, yet in them he speaks to us, and to all mankind, without any exception or limitation. The very reason of the thing puts it beyond dispute, that the duty which is here enjoined, is not peculiar to them, or to the Christians of the early ages. It no more regards any particular order of men, or particular time, than any particular country. No: it is of the most universal nature, respecting all times and all persons. Yea, and all

things: not meats and drinks only, and things pertaining to the ſenſes. The meaning is, *If any man*, of whatever rank, ſtation, circumſtances, in any nation, in any age of the world, *will* effectually come after me, *let him deny himſelf in all things: let him take up his croſs*, of whatever kind, yea and that *daily*, *and follow me.*

2. The *denying* ourſelves and the *taking up our croſs*, in the full extent of the expreſſion, is not a thing of ſmall concern: it is not expedient only, as are ſome of the circumſtantials of religion; but it is abſolutely, indiſpenſably neceſſary, either to our becoming, or continuing *his diſciples.* It is abſolutely neceſſary, in the very nature of the thing, to our *coming after him* and *following him.* Inſomuch that as far as we do not practiſe it, we are not *his diſciples.* If we do not continually *deny ourſelves*, we do not learn of him, but of other maſters. If we do not *take up our croſs daily*, we do not *come after him:* but after the world, or the prince of the world, or our own *fleſhly mind.* If we are not walking in the way of the croſs, we are not *following* him; we are not treading in his ſteps, but going back from, or at leaſt wide of him.

3. It is for this reaſon that ſo many miniſters of Chriſt, in almoſt every age and nation, particularly ſince the reformation of the church from the innovations and corruptions gradually crept into it, have wrote and ſpoke ſo largely on this important duty, both in their public diſcourſes

and

and private exhortations. This induced them to diſperſe abroad many tracts upon the ſubject; and ſome in our own nation. They knew both from the oracles of God, and from the teſtimony of their own experience, how impoſſible it was not to deny our maſter, unleſs we will deny ourſelves: and how vainly we attempt to follow him that was crucified, unleſs we take up our own croſs daily.

4. But may not this very conſideration make it reaſonable to enquire, If ſo much has been ſaid and wrote on the ſubject already, what need is there to ſay or write any more? I anſwer, there are no inconſiderable numbers, even of people fearing God, who have not had the opportunity either of hearing what has been ſpoke, or reading what has been wrote upon it. And perhaps if they had read much of what has been written, they would not have been much profited. Many who have wrote, (ſome of them large volumes) do by no means appear to have underſtood the ſubject. Either they had imperfect views of the very nature of it (and then they could never explain it to others) or they were unacquainted with the due extent of it; they did not ſee how *exceeding broad* this command is: or they were not ſenſible of the abſolute, the indiſpenſable neceſſity of it. Others ſpeak of it in ſo dark, ſo perplext, ſo intricate, ſo myſtical a manner, as if they deſigned rather to conceal it from the vulgar, than to explain it to common readers.

Others ſpeak admirably well, with great clearneſs and ſtrength, on the neceſſity of ſelf-denial; but then they deal in generals only, without coming to particular inſtances, and ſo are of little uſe to the bulk of mankind, to men of ordinary capacity and education. And if ſome of them do deſcend to particulars, it is to thoſe particulars only, which do not affect the generality of men, ſince they ſeldom, if ever, occur in common life: ſuch as the enduring impriſonment or tortures: the giving up, in a literal ſenſe, their houſes or lands, their huſbands or wives, children, or life itſelf: to none of which we are called, nor are likely to be, unleſs God ſhould permit times of public perſecution to return. In the mean time, I know of no writer in the *Engliſh* tongue, who has deſcribed the nature of ſelf-denial, in plain and intelligible terms, ſuch as lie level with common underſtandings, and applied it to thoſe little particulars, which daily occur in common life. A diſcourſe of this kind is wanted ſtill: and it is wanted the more, becauſe in every ſtage of the ſpiritual life, altho' there is a variety of particular hindrances, of our attaining grace or growing therein, yet are all reſolvible into theſe general ones, either we do not deny ourſelves, or we do not take up our croſs.

In order to ſupply this defect in ſome degree, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew, firſt, What it is for a man to deny himſelf, and what to take up his croſs: and ſecondly, That if a man be not fully

Chriſt's

Chriſt's diſciple, it is always owing to the want of this.

I. 1. I ſhall, firſt, endeavour to ſhew, What it is for a man, to *deny himſelf and take up his croſs daily*. This is a point which is of all others moſt neceſſary to be conſidered, and throughly underſtood, even on this account, that it is of all others moſt oppoſed, by numerous and powerful enemies. All our nature muſt certainly riſe up againſt this, even in its own defence: the world conſequently, the men who take nature not grace for their guide, abhor the very ſound of it. And the great enemy of our ſouls, well knowing its importance, cannot but move every ſtone againſt it. But this is not all: even thoſe who have in ſome meaſure ſhaken off the yoke of the devil, who have experienced, eſpecially of late years, a real work of grace in their hearts, yet are no friends to this grand doctrine of Chriſtianity, tho' it is ſo peculiarly inſiſted on by their maſter. Some of them are as deeply and totally ignorant concerning it, as if there was not one word about it in the bible. Others are farther off ſtill, having unawares imbibed ſtrong prejudices againſt it. Theſe they have received partly from outſide Chriſtians; men of a fair ſpeech and behaviour, who want nothing of godlineſs, but the power, nothing of religion, but the ſpirit: and partly from thoſe who did once, if they do not now, *taſte of the powers of the world to come*. But are there any of theſe who do not both practiſe ſelf-denial themſelves and recom-

mend it to others? You are little acquainted with mankind, if you doubt of this. There are whole bodies of men who only do not declare war againſt it. To go no farther than *London*. Look upon the whole body of *Predeſtinarians*, who by the free mercy of God, have lately been called out of the darkneſs of nature, into the light of faith. Are they patterns of ſelf-denial? How few of them even profeſs to practiſe it at all! How few of them recommend it themſelves, or are pleaſed with them that do? Rather do they not continually repreſent it in the moſt odious colours? As if it were ſeeking *ſalvation by works*, or *ſeeking to eſtabliſh our own righteouſneſs?* And how readily do *Antinomians* of all kinds, from the ſmooth *Moravian*, to the boiſtrous, foul-mouthed *Ranter*, join the cry, with their ſilly, unmeaning cant, of *legality*, and *preaching the law?* Therefore you are in conſtant danger of being wheedled, hectored, or ridiculed out of this important goſpel-doctrine, either by falſe teachers or falſe brethren; (more or leſs beguiled from the ſimplicity of the goſpel) if you are not deeply grounded therein. Let fervent prayer then go before, accompany, and follow, what you are now about to read, that it may be written in your heart by the finger of God, ſo as never to be eraſed.

2. But what is ſelf-denial? Wherein are we to deny ourſelves? And whence does the neceſſity of this ariſe? I anſwer, the will of God is the ſupreme,

ſupreme, unalterable rule for every intelligent creature: equally binding every angel in heaven, and every man upon earth. Nor can it be otherwiſe: this is the natural, neceſſary reſult of the relation between creatures and their Creator. But if the will of God be our one rule of action, in every thing, great and ſmall, it follows by undeniable conſequence, that we are not to do our own will in any thing. Here therefore we ſee at once the nature, with the ground and reaſon of ſelf-denial. We ſee the nature of ſelf-denial: it is the denying or refuſing to follow our own will, from a conviction that the will of God is the only rule of action to us. And we ſee the reaſon thereof, becauſe we are creatures; becauſe *it is he that hath made us and not we ourſelves.*

3. This reaſon for ſelf-denial muſt hold, even with regard to the angels of God in heaven: and with regard to man, innocent and holy, as he came out of the hands of his Creator. But a farther reaſon for it ariſes, from the condition wherein all men are ſince the fall. We are all now *ſhapen in wickedneſs, and in ſin did our mother conceive us.* Our nature is altogether corrupt, in every power and faculty. And our will, depraved equally with the reſt, is wholly bent to indulge our natural corruption. On the other hand, it is the will of God, that we reſiſt and counter-act that corruption, not at ſome times, or in ſome things only, but at all times,

and in all things. Here therefore is a farther ground for conſtant and univerſal ſelf-denial.

4. To illuſtrate this a little further. The will of God is a path leading ſtraight to God. The will of man which once ran parallel with it, is now another path, not only different from it, but in our preſent ſtate directly contrary to it. It leads from God; if therefore we walk in the one, we muſt neceſſarily quit the other. We cannot walk in both. Indeed a man *of faint heart and feeble hands*, may *go in two ways*, one after the other. But he cannot walk in two ways at the ſame time: he cannot at one and the ſame time, follow his own will, and follow the will of God; he muſt chuſe the one or the other: denying God's will, to follow his one, or deny himſelf, to follow the will of God.

5. Now it is undoubtedly pleaſing for the time, to follow our own will, by indulging in any inſtance that offers, the corruption of our nature. But the following it in any thing, we ſo far ſtrengthen the perverſeneſs of our will: and by indulging it, we continually increaſe the corruption of our nature. So by the food which is agreeable to the palate we often increaſe a bodily diſeaſe. It gratifies the taſte; but it inflames the diſorder. It brings pleaſure: but it alſo brings death.

6. On the whole then, to deny ourſelves is, to deny our own will, where it does not fall in with the will of God, and that, however pleaſing it may be: it is, to deny ourſelves any plea-

ſure

ſure which does not ſpring from, and lead to God: that is, in effect to refuſe going out of our way, though into a pleaſant, flowry path: to refuſe what we know to be deadly poiſon, though agreeable to the taſte.

7. And every one that would follow Chriſt, that would be his real diſciple, muſt not only *deny himſelf*, but *take up his croſs* alſo. A croſs is, any thing contrary to our will, any thing diſpleaſing to our nature. So that taking up our croſs goes a little farther than denying ourſelves: it riſes a little higher, and is a more difficult taſk to fleſh and blood: it being more eaſy, to forego pleaſure, than to endure pain.

8. Now in *running the race which is ſet before us*, according to the will of God, there is often a croſs lying in the way, that is, ſomething which is not joyous, but grievous, ſomething which is contrary to our will, which is diſpleaſing to our nature. What then is to be done? The choice is plain; either we muſt *take up our croſs*, or we muſt turn aſide from the way of God, *from the holy commandment delivered to us:* if we do not ſtop altogether, or turn back to everlaſting perdition.

9. In order to the healing of that corruption that evil diſeaſe which every man brings with him into the world, it is often needful, to pluck out as it were a right-eye, to cut off a right-hand: ſo painful is either the thing itſelf which muſt be done, or the only means of doing it:

the parting, ſuppoſe with a fooliſh deſire, with an inordinate affection: or a ſeparation, from the object of it, without which it can never be extinguiſhed. In the former kind, the tearing away ſuch a deſire or affection, when it is deeply rooted in the ſoul, is often like the piercing of a ſword, yea, like *the dividing aſunder of the ſoul and ſpirit, the joints and marrow.* The Lord then *ſits upon* the ſoul *as a refiner's fire*, to burn up all the droſs thereof. And this is a croſs indeed: it is eſſentially painful: it muſt be ſo in the very nature of the thing. The ſoul cannot be thus torn aſunder, it cannot paſs through the fire, without pain.

10. In the latter kind, the means to heal a ſinſick ſoul, to cure a fooliſh deſire, an inordinate affection, are often painful, not in the nature of the thing, but from the nature of the diſeaſe. So when our Lord ſaid to the rich young man, *Go ſell that thou haſt and give it to the poor*, (as well knowing, this was the only means of healing his covetouſneſs) the very thought of it gave him ſo much pain, that he *went away ſorrowful:* chuſing rather to part with his hope of heaven, than his poſſeſſions on earth. This was a burden he could not conſent to lift, a croſs he would not take up. And in the one kind or the other every follower of Chriſt will ſurely have need to *take up his croſs daily.*

11. The *taking up* differs a little from *bearing his croſs.* We are then properly ſaid to *bear our croſs*, when we endure what is laid upon us without

out our choice, with meekneſs and reſignation. Whereas we do not properly *take up our croſs*, but when we voluntarily ſuffer what it is in our power to avoid: when we willingly embrace the will of God, though contrary to our own: when we chuſe what is painful, becauſe it is the will of our wiſe and gracious Creator.

12. And thus it behoves every diſciple of Chriſt, to *take up*, as well as to *bear* his *croſs*. Indeed in one ſenſe, it is not *his* alone; it is common to him and many others: ſeeing *there is no temptation befals any man* εἰ μὴ ἀνθρώπινος· *but ſuch as is common to men*, ſuch as is incident and adapted to their common nature, and ſituation in the preſent world. But in another ſenſe, as it is conſidered with all its circumſtances, it is *his*; peculiar to himſelf: it is prepared of God for him: it is given by God to him, as a token of his love: and if he receives it as ſuch, and (after uſing ſuch means to remove the preſſure as Chriſtian wiſdom directs) lies as clay in the Potter's hand, it is diſpoſed and ordered by God for his good, both with regard to the quality of it, and in reſpect to its quantity and degree, its duration, and every other circumſtance.

13. In all this we may eaſily conceive our bleſſed Lord to act as the phyſician of our ſouls, not merely *for his own pleaſure, but for our profit that we may be partakers of his holineſs*. If in ſearching our wounds he puts us to pain, it is only in order to heal them. He cuts away what

what is putrified or unfound, in order to preſerve the found part. And if we freely chuſe the loſs of a limb, rather than the whole body ſhould periſh, how much more ſhould we chuſe, figuratively, to cut off a right-hand, rather than the whole ſoul ſhould be caſt into hell?

14. We ſee plainly then both the nature and ground, of *taking up our croſs*. It does not imply the *diſcipling ourſelves* (as ſome ſpeak) the literally tearing our own fleſh: the wearing hair-cloth, or iron girdles, or any thing elſe that would impair our bodily health: (although we know not what allowance God may make for thoſe, who acts thus through involuntary ignorance:) but the embracing the will of God, tho' contrary to our own; the chuſing wholeſome, tho' bitter, medicines: the freely accepting temporary pain, of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, when it is either eſſentially or accidentally neceſſary to eternal pleaſure.

II. 1. I am, ſecondly, to ſhew, that it is always owing to the want either of ſelf-denial, or taking up his croſs, that any man does not throughly *follow him*, is not fully a *diſciple of* Chriſt.

It is true, this may be partly owing in ſome caſes, to the want of the means of grace: of hearing the true word of God ſpoken with power, of the ſacraments, or of Chriſtian fellowſhip. But where none of theſe is wanting, the great hindrance

hindrance of our receiving or growing in the grace of God, is always the want of denying ourſelves, or taking up our croſs.

2. A few inſtances will make this plain. A man hears the word which is able to ſave his ſoul. He is well pleaſed with what he hears, acknowledges the truth, and is a little affected by it. Yet he remains *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*, ſenſeleſs and unawakened. Why is this? Becauſe he will not part with his boſom-ſin, tho' he now knows it is an abomination unto the Lord. He came to hear, full of luſt and unholy deſire: and he will not part with them. Therefore no deep impreſſion is made upon him, but his fooliſh heart is ſtill hardened: that is, he is ſtill ſenſeleſs and unawakened, becauſe he will not *deny himſelf*.

3. Suppoſe he begins to awake out of ſleep, and his eyes are a little opened, why are they ſo quickly cloſed again? Why does he again ſink into the ſleep of death? Becauſe he again yields to his boſom-ſin: he drinks again of the pleaſing poiſon. Therefore it is impoſſible that any laſting impreſſion, ſhould be made upon his heart. That is, he relapſes into his fatal inſenſibility, becauſe he will not *deny himſelf*.

4. But this is not the caſe with all. We have many inſtances of thoſe, who when once awakened ſleep no more. The impreſſions once received, do not wear away; they are not only deep, but laſting. And yet many of theſe have not found

found what they seek: they mourn, and yet are not comforted. Now why is this? It is because they do not *bring forth fruits meet for repentance:* because they do not according to the grace they have received, *cease from evil, and do good.* They do not cease from the easily besetting sin, the sin of their constitution, of their education, or of their profession. Or they omit doing the good they may, and know they ought to do, because of some disagreeable circumstances attending it: that is, they do not attain faith, because they will not *deny themselves*, or *take up their cross*.

5. "But this man did receive *the heavenly gift.* He did *taste of the powers of the world to come.* He saw *the light of the glory of* God, *in the face of* Jesus Christ. The *peace which passeth all understanding*, did *rule his heart and mind*; and the love of God was shed abroad therein, by the Holy Ghost which was given unto him. Yet he is now weak as another man. He again relishes the things of earth, and has more taste for the things which are seen, than for those which are not seen. The eye of his understanding is closed again, so that he cannot *see him that is invisible.* His love is waxed cold, and the peace of God no longer rules in his heart. And no marvel: for he has again given place to the devil, and grieved the Holy Spirit of God. He has turned again unto folly, to some pleasing sin, if not in outward act, yet in heart." He has given place to pride, or anger, or desire; to self-will, or stubbornness.

Or

Or he did not ſtir up the gift of God which was in him; he gave way to ſpiritual ſloth, and would not be at the pains of *praying always, and watching thereunto with all perſeverance.* That is, he made ſhipwreck of the faith, for want of ſelf-denial and *taking up his croſs daily.*

6. But perhaps he has not made ſhipwreck of the faith: he has ſtill a meaſure of the Spirit of adoption, which continues to witneſs with his ſpirit that he his a child of God. However he is not *going on to perfection:* he is not, at once, hungring and thirſting after righteouſneſs, panting after the whole image and full enjoyment of God, as the hart after the water-brook. Rather he is weary and faint in his mind, and as it were hovering between life and death. And why is he thus, but becauſe he hath forgotten the word of God, *By works is faith made perfect?* He does not uſe all diligence, in working the works of God. He does not *continue inſtant in prayer*, private as well as public: in communicating, hearing, meditation, faſting and religious conference. If he does not wholly neglect ſome of theſe means, at leaſt he does not uſe them all, with his might. Or he is not zealous of works of charity, as well as works of piety. He is not merciful after his power, with the full ability which God giveth. He does not fervently ſerve the Lord, by doing good to men, in every kind, and in every degree he can, to their ſouls as well as their bodies. And why does he not continue

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in prayer? Becauſe in times of dryneſs it is pain and grief unto him. He does not continue in hearing at all opportunities, becauſe ſleep is ſweet; or it is cold, or dark, or rainy. But why does he not continue in works of mercy? Becauſe he cannot feed the hungry, or cloath the naked, unleſs he retrench the expence of his own apparel, or uſe cheaper and leſs pleaſing food. Beſide which, the viſiting the ſick, or thoſe that are in priſon, is attended with many diſagreeable circumſtances. And ſo are moſt works of ſpiritual mercy; reproof, in particular. He *would* reprove his neighbour; but ſometimes ſhame, ſometimes fear comes between. For he may expoſe himſelf not only to ridicule, but to heavier inconveniences too. Upon theſe and the like conſiderations, he omits one or more, if not all works of mercy and piety. Therefore his faith is not made perfect, neither can he grow in grace: namely, becauſe he will not *deny himſelf, and take up his daily croſs.*

7. It manifeſtly follows, That it is always owing to the want, either of ſelf-denial or taking up his croſs, that a man does not throughly follow his Lord, that he is not fully a diſciple of Chriſt. It is owing to this, that he who is dead in ſin, does not awake, tho' the trumpet be blown: that he who begins to awake out of ſleep, yet has no deep or laſting conviction: that he who is deeply and laſtingly convinced of ſin, does

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not attain remiſſion of ſins: that ſome who have received this heavenly gift, retain it not, but make ſhipwreck of the faith: and that others, if they do not draw back to perdition, yet are weary and faint in their mind, and do not reach the mark of the prize of the high-calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.

III. 1. How eaſily may we learn hence, that they know neither the ſcripture nor the power of God, who directly or indirectly, in public or in private, oppoſe the doctrine of ſelf-denial and the daily croſs. How totally ignorant are theſe men, of an hundred particular texts, as well as of the general tenor of the whole oracles of God? And how entirely unacquainted muſt they be, with true, genuine, Chriſtian experience! Of the manner wherein the Holy Spirit ever did, and does at this day work in the ſouls of men? They may talk indeed very loudly and confidently, (a natural fruit of ignorance) as though they were the only men who underſtood either the word of God, or the experience of his children. But their words are, in every ſenſe, *vain words*: they are weighed in the ballance and found wanting.

2. We may learn from hence, ſecondly, the real cauſe why not only many particular perſons, but even bodies of men, who were once burning and ſhining lights, have now loſt both their light and heat. If they did not hate and oppoſe, they

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at leaſt lightly eſteemed this precious goſpel-doctrine. If they did not boldly ſay, *Abnegationem omnem proculcamus, internecioni damus*; "We trample all ſelf-denial under foot, we devote it to deſtruction:" yet they neither valued it according to its high importance nor took any pains in practiſing it. *Hanc myſtici docent*, ſaid that great, bad man, *The myſtic writers teach ſelf-denial:* no, the inſpired writers. And God teaches it to every ſoul, who is willing to hear his voice.

3. * We may learn from hence, thirdly, That it is not enough for a miniſter of the goſpel, not to oppoſe the doctrine of ſelf-denial, to ſay nothing concerning it. Nay, he cannot ſatisfy his duty, by ſaying a little in favour of it. If he would indeed be pure from the blood of all men, he muſt ſpeak of it frequently and largely: he muſt inculcate the neceſſity of it, in the cleareſt and ſtrongeſt manner. He muſt preſs it with his might, on all perſons, at all times, and in all places: laying *line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept.* So ſhall he have a conſcience void of offence: ſo ſhall he ſave his own ſoul and thoſe that hear him.

4. Laſtly, See that you apply this, every one of you, to your own ſoul. Meditate upon it when you are in ſecret: ponder it in your heart. Take care not only to underſtand it throughly, but to remember it to your live's end. Cry unto the ſtrong

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for ſtrength, that you may no ſooner underſtand, than enter upon the practice of it. Delay not the time, but practiſe it immediately, from this very hour: practiſe it univerſally, on every one of the thouſand occaſions which occur in all circumſtances of life. Practiſe it daily; without intermiſſion, from the hour you firſt ſet your hand to the plow: and enduring therein to the end, till your ſpirit returns to God.

SERMON

SERMON XLIX.

THE CURE OF EVIL-SPEAKING.

MATT. xviii. 15, 16, 17.

If thy brother ſhall ſin againſt thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he will hear thee, thou haſt gained thy brother.

But if he will not hear, take with thee one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witneſſes, every word may be eſtabliſhed.

And if he will not hear them, tell it to the church: but if he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as an Heathen man and a Publican.

1. SPEAK *evil of no man*, ſays the great apoſtle; as plain a command as *Thou ſhalt do no murder*. But who even among Chriſtians regards this command? Yea, how few are there, that ſo much as underſtand it? What is *evil-ſpeaking?* It is not, (as ſome ſuppoſe) the ſame with lying or ſlandering. All a man ſays, may be as true as the bible; and yet the ſaying of it is evil-ſpeaking. For evil ſpeaking is neither more nor leſs, than ſpeaking evil of an abſent perſon: relating ſomething evil which was really done or ſaid, by one that is not preſent when

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it is related. Suppoſe, having ſeen a man drunk or heard him curſe or ſwear, I tell this when he is abſent, it is evil-ſpeaking. In our language this is alſo by an extremely proper name termed *backbiting*. Nor is there any material difference between this, and what we uſually ſtile *tale-bearing*. If the tale be delivered in a ſoft and quiet manner, (perhaps with expreſſions of good-will to the perſon, and of hope, that thing may not be quite ſo bad) then we call it *whiſpering*. But in what manner it be done, the things is the ſame; the ſame in ſubſtance if not in circumſtance. Still it is evil-ſpeaking; ſtill this command, *Speak evil of no man*, is trampled under foot, if we relate to another the fault of a third perſon, when he is not preſent to anſwer for himſelf.

2. And how extremely common is this ſin, among all orders and degrees of men? How do high and low, rich and poor, wiſe and fooliſh, learned and unlearned, run into it continually? Perſons who differ from each other in all things elſe, nevertheleſs agree in this. How few are there that can teſtify before God, "I am clear in this matter: I have always ſet a watch before my mouth, and kept the door of my lips?" What converſation do you hear, of any conſiderable length, whereof evil-ſpeaking is not one ingredient? And that, even among perſons, who in the general have the fear of God before their eyes,

eyes, and do really desire to have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man.

3. And the very commonness of this sin, makes it difficult to be avoided. As we are incompassed with it on every side, so if we are not deeply sensible of the danger, and continually guarding against it, we are liable to be carried away by the torrent. In this instance, almost the whole of mankind is, as it were, in a conspiracy against us. And their example steals upon us we know not how; so that we insensibly slide into the imitation of it. Besides, it is recommended from within as well as from without. There is scarce any wrong temper in the mind of man, which may not be occasionally gratified by it, and consequently incline us to it. It gratifies our *pride*, to relate those faults of others, whereof we think ourselves not to be guilty. *Anger*, resentment, and all unkind tempers are indulged, by speaking against those with whom we are displeased. And in many cases, by reciting the sins of their neighbours, men indulge their own *foolish and hurtful desires*.

4. Evil-speaking is the more difficult to be avoided, because it frequently attacks us in disguise. We speak thus, out of a noble, generous ('tis well if we do not say, *holy*,) *indignation* against these vile creatures! We commit sin, from mere hatred of sin! We serve the devil, out of pure zeal of God! It is merely in order to punish the wicked, that we run into this wickedness.

edneſs. So do "the paſſions (as one ſpeaks) all juſtify themſelves," and palm ſin upon us, under the veil of holineſs.

5. But is there no way to avoid the ſnare? Unqueſtionably there is. Our bleſſed Lord has marked out a plain way for his followers, in the words above recited. None who warily and ſteadily walks in this path, will ever fall into evil-ſpeaking. This rule is either an infallible preventive, or a certain cure of it. In the preceding verſes our Lord had ſaid, *Wo to the world becauſe of offences.* Unſpeakable miſery will ariſe in the world from this baleful fountain. (*Offences* are all things whereby any one is turned out of, or hindered in, the ways of God.) *For it muſt be that offences come.* Such is the nature of things; ſuch the wickedneſs, folly and weakneſs of mankind. *But Wo to that man*, miſerable is that man, *by whom the offence cometh. Wherefore if thy hand, thy foot, thine eye cauſe thee to offend*—If the moſt dear enjoyment, the moſt beloved and uſeful perſon, turn thee out of, or hinder thee in the way, *pluck it out, cut them off, and caſt them from thee.* But how can we avoid giving offence to ſome, and being offended at others? Eſpecially ſuppoſe they are quite in the wrong, and we ſee it with our own eyes? Our Lord here teaches us how: he lays down a ſure method of avoiding offences and evil-ſpeaking together. *If thy brother ſhall ſin againſt thee, go and tell him of his fault, be-*

tween thee and him alone: if he will hear thee, thou haſt gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witneſſes every word may be eſtabliſhed. And if he will not hear them, tell it to the church; but if he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as an Heathen man and a Publican.

I. 1. Firſt, *If thy brother ſhall ſin againſt thee, go and tell him of his fault, between thee and him alone.* The moſt literal way of following this firſt rule, where it is practicable, is the beſt. Therefore if thou ſeeſt with thine own eyes a brother, a fellow Chriſtian commit undeniable ſin, or heareſt it with thine own ears, ſo that it is impoſſible for thee to doubt the fact, then thy part is plain: take the very firſt opportunity of going to him: and if thou can'ſt have acceſs, *tell him of his fault between thee and him alone.* Indeed great care is to be taken, that this is done in a right *ſpirit*, and in a right *manner*.—The ſucceſs of a reproof greatly depends on the ſpirit wherein it is given. Be not therefore wanting in earneſt prayer to God, that it may be given in a lowly ſpirit: with a deep, piercing conviction, that it is God alone who maketh thee to differ, and that if any good be done by what is now ſpoken, God doth himſelf. Pray, that he would guard thy heart, inlighten thy mind, and direct thy tongue to ſuch words as he may pleaſe to bleſs. See that thou ſpeak in a meek as well as a lowly ſpirit: for *the wrath of man worketh*

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not the righteouſneſs of God. If he be *overtaken in a fault*, he can no otherwiſe be *reſtored* than *in the ſpirit of meekneſs*. If he *oppoſes* the truth, yet he cannot be *brought to the knowledge* thereof, but by *gentleneſs*. Still ſpeak in a ſpirit of tender love, *which many waters cannot quench*. If love is not conquered, it conquers all things: who can tell the force of love?

Love can bow down the ſtubborn neck,
The ſtone to fleſh convert;
Soften and melt and pierce and break
An adamantine heart.

Confirm then your love toward him, and you will thereby *heap coals of fire upon his head*.

2. But ſee that the *manner* alſo wherein you ſpeak, be according to the goſpel of Chriſt. Avoid every thing in look, geſture, word and tone of voice, that ſavours of *pride* or ſelf-ſufficiency. Studiouſly avoid every thing magiſterial or dogmatical, every thing that looks like arrogance or aſſuming. Beware of the moſt diſtant approach to diſdain, overbearing, or *contempt*. With equal care avoid all appearance of *anger*, and though you uſe great plainneſs of ſpeech, yet let there be no reproach, no railing accuſation, no token of any warmth, but that of love. Above all, let there be no ſhadow of *hate* or ill-will, no bitterneſs or ſourneſs of expreſſion; but uſe the air and language of ſweetneſs as well as

gentleneſs, that all may appear to flow from love in the heart. And yet this ſweetneſs need not hinder your ſpeaking in the moſt ſerious and ſolemn manner: as far as may be, in the very words of the oracles of God, (for there are none like them) as under the eye of him who is coming to judge the quick and dead.

3. If you have not an opportunity of ſpeaking to him in perſon, or cannot have acceſs, you may do it by a meſſenger; by a common friend, in whoſe prudence, as well as uprightneſs, you can throughly confide. Such a perſon, ſpeaking in your name, and in the ſpirit and manner above deſcribed, may anſwer the ſame end, and in a good degree ſupply your lack of ſervice. Only beware you do not *feign* the want of opportunity, in order to ſhun the croſs; neither take it for granted, that you cannot have acceſs, without ever making the trial. Whenever you can ſpeak in your own perſon, it is far better. But you ſhould rather do it by another than not at all: this way is better than none.

4. But what if you can neither ſpeak yourſelf, nor find ſuch a meſſenger as you can confide in? If this be really the caſe, it then only remains, to write. And there may be ſome circumſtances, which make this the moſt adviſable way of ſpeaking. One of theſe circumſtances is, when the perſon with whom we have to do, is of ſo warm and impetuous a temper, as does not eaſily bear reproof, eſpecially from an equal or inferior.

inferior. But it may be so introduced and softened in writing, as to make it far more tolerable. Besides, many will read the very same words, which they could not bear to hear. It does not give so violent a shock to their pride, nor so sensibly touch their honour. And suppose it makes little impression at first, they will perhaps give it a second reading, and upon farther consideration, lay to heart, what before they disregarded. If you add your name, this is nearly the same thing, as going to him, and speaking in person. And this should always be done, unless it be rendered improper by some very particular reason.

5. It should be well observed, not only that this is a step which our Lord absolutely commands us to take, but that he commands us to take this step first, before we attempt any other. No alternative is allowed, no choice of any thing else: this is the way; walk thou in it. It is true, he enjoins us, if need require, to take two other steps. But they are to be taken successively *after* this step, and neither of them *before* it. Much less are we to take any other step, either before, or beside this. To do any thing else, or not to do this, is therefore equally inexcusable.

6. Do not think to excuse yourself for taking an entirely different step, by saying, "Why, I did not speak to any one, 'till I was so *burdened* that I could not refrain." You was burdened! It was no wonder you should; unless your conscience was seared. For you was under the guilt

of ſin, of diſobeying a plain commandment of God. You ought immediately to have gone and *told your brother of his fault between you and him alone.* If you did not, how ſhould you be other than burdened (unleſs your heart was utterly hardened) while you was trampling the command of God under foot, and *hating your brother in your heart?* And what a way have you found to *unburden* yourſelf? God reproves you for a ſin of omiſſion, for not telling your brother of his fault; and you comfort yourſelf under his reproof, by a ſin of commiſſion, by telling your brother's fault to another perſon! Eaſe bought by ſin is a dear purchaſe: I truſt in God you will have no eaſe, but will be burdened ſo much the more, 'till you *go to your brother, and tell him,* and no one elſe.

7. I know but of one exception to this rule. There may be a peculiar caſe, wherein it is neceſſary to accuſe the guilty tho' abſent, in order to preſerve the innocent. For inſtance: you are acquainted with the deſign which a man has againſt the property or life of his neighbour. Now the caſe may be ſo circumſtanced, that there is no other way of hindering that deſign from taking effect, but the making it known without delay, to him againſt whom it is laid. In this caſe therefore this rule is ſet aſide, as is that of the apoſtle; *Speak evil of no man:* and it is lawful, yea it is our bounden duty, to ſpeak evil of an abſent perſon, in order to prevent his doing evil,

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to others and himself at the same time. But remember mean-while, that all evil-speaking is, in its own nature deadly poison. Therefore if you are sometimes constrained to use it as a medicine, yet use it with fear and trembling; seeing it is so dangerous a medicine, that nothing but absolute necessity can excuse your using it at all. Accordingly use it as seldom as possible; never but when there is such a necessity: and even then use as little of it as is possible; only so much as is necessary for the end proposed. At all other times, *go and tell him of his fault, between thee and him alone.*

II. 1. But what *if he will not hear?* If he repay evil for good? If he be enraged rather than convinced? What if he hear to no purpose, and go on still in the evil of his way? We must expect this will frequently be the case; the mildest and tendercst reproof, will have no effect, but the blessing we wished for another, will return into our own bosom. And what are we to do then? Our Lord has given us a clear and full direction. Then *take with thee one or two more:* This is the second step. Take one or two whom you know to be of a loving spirit, lovers of God and of their neighbour. See likewise that they be of a lowly spirit, and *cloathed with humility.* Let them also be such as are meek and gentle, patient and long-suffering; not apt to *return evil for evil, or railing for rail-*

ing, but contrariwiſe bleſſing. Let them be men of underſtanding, ſuch as are endued with wiſdom from above; and men unbiaſſed, free from partiality, free from prejudice of any kind. Care ſhould likewiſe be taken, that both the perſons and their characters be well-known to him. And let thoſe that are acceptable to him be choſen, preferable to any others.

2. Love will dictate the manner wherein they ſhould proceed, according to the nature of the caſe. Nor can any one particular manner be preſcribed for all caſes. But perhaps in general one might adviſe, before they enter upon the thing itſelf, let them mildly and affectionately declare, that they have no anger or prejudice toward him, and that it is merely from a principle of goodwill, that they now come, or at all concern themſelves with his affairs. To make this the more apparent, they might then calmly attend, to your repetition of your former converſation with him, and to what he ſaid in his own defence, before they attempted to determine any thing. After this they would be better able to judge, in what manner to proceed, *that by the mouth of two or three witneſſes, every word might be eſtabliſhed:* that whatever you have ſaid, may have its full force, by the additional weight of their authority.

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3. In order to this, may they not 1. Briefly repeat what you ſpoke, and what he anſwered? 2. Inlarge upon, open and confirm the reaſons which you had given? 3. Give weight to your reproof, ſhewing how juſt, how kind, and how ſeaſonable it was: and laſtly, inforce the advices and perſuaſions which you had annext to it? And theſe may likewiſe hereafter, if need ſhould require, bear witneſs of what was ſpoken.

4. With regard to this, as well as the preceding rule we may obſerve, That our Lord gives us no choice, leaves us no alternative, but expreſly commands us, to do this, and nothing elſe in the place of it. He likewiſe directs us, When to do this? Neither ſooner, or later. Namely, *after* we have taken the firſt, and *before* we have taken the third ſtep. It is then only that we are authorized to relate the evil another has done, to thoſe whom we deſire to bare a part with us, in this great inſtance of brotherly love. But let us have a care, how we relate it to any other perſon, till both theſe ſteps have been taken. If we neglect to take theſe, or if we take any others, what wonder if we are burdened ſtill? For we are ſinners againſt God and againſt our neighbour. And how fairly ſoever we may colour it, yet if we have any conſcience, our ſin will find us out, and bring a burden upon our ſoul.

III. 1. That we may be throughly inſtructed in this weighty affair, our Lord has given us a ſtill farther direction. *If he will not hear them*, then and not till then, *tell it to the church.* This is the third ſtep. All the queſtion is, How this word, *the church*, is here to be underſtood? But the very nature of the thing will determine this, beyond all reaſonable doubt. You cannot tell it to *the national church*, the whole body of men termed *the church of England.* Neither would it anſwer any Chriſtian end, if you could: this therefore is not the meaning of the word. Neither can you tell it to that whole body of people in *England*, with whom you have a more immediate connexion. Nor indeed would this anſwer any good end: the word therefore is not to be underſtood thus. It would not anſwer any valuable end, to tell the faults of every particular member, to *the church* (if you would ſo term it) the congregation or *ſociety* united together in *London.* It remains that you tell it to the elder or elders of the church, to thoſe who are overſeers of that flock of Chriſt, to which you both belong, who watch over yours and his ſoul, *as they that muſt give account.* And this ſhould be done, if it conveniently can, in the preſence of the perſon concerned, and tho' plainly, yet with all the tenderneſs and love, which the nature of the thing will admit. It properly belongs to their office, to determine concerning the behaviour of thoſe under their care, and to *rebuke* according

be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee— That the world may believe that thou haſt ſent me! The Lord haſten the time! The Lord enable *us*, thus to love one another, not only *in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth*, even as Chriſt hath loved us.

SERMON

SERMON L.

THE USE OF MONEY.

LUKE xvi. 9.

I say unto you, make unto yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into the everlasting habitations.

1. OUR Lord having finished the beautiful parable of the prodigal son, which he had particularly addressed to those who murmured at his *receiving* Publicans and sinners, adds another relation of a different kind, addressed rather to the children of God. *He said unto his disciples* (ver. 1.) not so much to the Scribes and Pharisees, to whom he had been speaking before—*There was a certain rich man, who had a steward, and he was accused to him of wasting his goods. And calling him he said, Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou canst be no longer steward*, (ver. 2.) After reciting the method which the bad steward used, to provide against the day of necessity, our Saviour adds, *His Lord commended the unjust steward*, namely in *this respect*, that he used timely precaution, and subjoins

joins this weighty reflection, *The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.* (ver. 8.) Those who seek no other portion than *this world, are wiser*, (not absolutely; for they are, one and all, the veryest fools, the most egregious madmen under heaven, but) *in their generation*, in their own way: they are more consistent with themselves, they are truer to their acknowledged principles, they more steadily pursue their end, *than the children of light*, than they who see *the light of the glory of* God, *in the face of* Jesus Christ. Then follow the words above recited. *And I*—the only begotten Son of God, the Creator, Lord and possessor of heaven and earth and all that is therein: the judge of all, to whom ye are to *give an account of* your *stewardship* when ye *can be no longer stewards—I say unto you*, learn in this respect, even of the unjust steward, *make yourselves friends*, by wise timely precaution, *of the mammon of unrighteousness*. *Mammon* means riches or money. It is termed *the mammon of unrighteousness*, because of the unrighteous manner wherein it is frequently procured, and, wherein even that which was honestly procured, is generally employed. *Make yourselves friends* of this by doing all possible good, particularly to the children of God: *that when ye fail*, when ye return to dust, when ye have no more place under the sun, those of them who are gone before *may re-*

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ceive you, may welcome you *into the everlasting habitations.*

2. An excellent branch of Christian wisdom here inculcated by our Lord on all his followers, namely, the right use of money; a subject largely spoken of, after their manner, by men of the world: but not sufficiently considered by those whom God hath chosen out of the word. These generally do not consider as the importance of the subject requires, the use of this excellent talent. Neither do they understand how to employ it to the greatest advantage; the introduction of which into the world, is one admirable instance of the wise and gracious providence of God. It has indeed been the manner of poets, orators and philosophers, in almost all ages and nations, to rail at this, as the grand corrupter of the world, the bane of virtue, the pest of human society. Hence nothing so commonly heard as,

Ferrum, Ferroq; nocentius aurum:

And "gold, more mischievous than keenest steel." Hence the lamentable complaint

Effodiuntur opes, irritamenta malorum.

Nay, one celebrated writer gravely exhorts his countrymen, in order to banish all vice at once, to "throw all their money into the sea."

In mare proximum,
Summi materiem mali!

But is not all this mere, empty rant? Is there any solid reason therein? By no means. For let the world be as corrupt as it will, is gold or silver to blame? *The love of money*, we know, *is the root of all evil:* but not the thing itself. The fault does not lie in the money, but in them that use it. It may be used ill: and what may not? But it may likewise be used well: it is full as applicable to the best, as to the worst uses. It is of unspeakable service to all civilized nations, in all the common affairs of life. It is a most compendious instrument, of transacting all manner of business, and (if we use it according to Christian wisdom) doing all manner of good. It is true, were man in a state of innocence, or were all men *filled with the Holy Ghost*, so that like the infant church at *Jerusalem*, *no man counted any thing he had his own*, but *distribution was made to every one as he had need*, the use of it would be superseded: as we cannot conceive there is any thing of the kind among the inhabitants of heaven. But in the present state of mankind, it is an excellent gift of God, answering the noblest ends. In the hands of his children, it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, raiment for the naked. It gives to the traveller and the stranger, where to lay his head. By it we may supply the place of an husband to the widow, and

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of a father to the fatherleſs. We may be a defence for the oppreſſed, a means of health to the ſick, of eaſe to them that are in pain: it may be as eyes to the blind, as feet to the lame: yea, a lifter up from the gates of death.

3. It is therefore of the higheſt concern, that all who fear God, know how to employ this valuable talent: that they be inſtructed, how it may anſwer theſe glorious ends, and in the higheſt degree. And perhaps all the inſtructions which are neceſſary for this, may be reduced to three plain rules, by the exact obſervance whereof, we may approve ourſelves faithful ſtewards of *the mammon of unrighteouſneſs*.

I. 1. The firſt of theſe is (he that heareth let him underſtand!) *Gain all you can.* Here we may ſpeak like the children of the world: we meet them on their own ground. And it is our bounden duty to do this: we ought to gain all we can gain, without buying gold too dear, without paying more for it than it is worth. But this it is certain we ought not to do; we ought not to gain money at the expence of life: nor (which is in effect the ſame thing) at the expence of our health. Therefore no gain whatſoever ſhould induce us to enter into, or to continue in any employ, which is of ſuch a kind, or is attended with ſo hard or ſo long labour, as to impair our conſtitution. Neither ſhould we begin or continue in any buſineſs, which neceſſarily deprives

deprives us of proper ſeaſons, for food and ſleep in ſuch a proportion as our nature requires. Indeed there is a great difference here: ſome employments are abſolutely and totally unhealthy: as thoſe which imply the dealing much with arſenic, or other equally hurtful minerals: or the breathing an air tainted with ſtreams of melting lead, which muſt at length deſtroy the firmeſt conſtitution. Others may not be abſolutely unhealthy, but only to perſons of a weak conſtitution. Such are thoſe which require many hours to be ſpent in writing; eſpecially if a perſon write ſitting, and lean upon his ſtomach, or remain long in an uneaſy poſture. But whatever it is which reaſon or experience ſhews to be deſtructive of health or ſtrength, that we may not ſubmit to; ſeeing *the life is more* valuable *than meat, and the body than raiment.* And if we are already engaged in ſuch an employ, we ſhould exchange it as ſoon as poſſible, for ſome, which if it leſſen our gain, will however not leſſen our health.

2. We are ſecondly, to *gain all we can*, without hurting our mind any more than our body. For neither may we hurt this: we muſt preſerve, at all events, the ſpirit of an healthful mind. Therefore we may not engage or continue in any ſinful trade, any that is contrary to the law of God, or of our country. Such are all that neceſſarily imply our robbing or defrauding the king of his lawful cuſtoms. For it is at leaſt as ſinful,

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to defraud the king of his right, as to rob our fellow-subjects. And the king has full as much right to his customs, as we have to our houses and apparel. Other businesses there are, which however innocent *in themselves*, cannot be followed with innocence *now*: at least, not in *England:* such, for instance, as will not afford a competent maintenance, without cheating or lying, or conformity to some custom, which is not consistent with a good conscience. These likewise are sacredly to be avoided, whatever gain they may be attended with, provided we follow the custom of the trade. For, to gain money we must not lose our souls. There are yet others which many pursue with perfect innocence, without hurting either their body or mind. And yet perhaps *you* cannot; either they may entangle you in that company, which would destroy your soul: and by repeated experiments it may appear, that you cannot separate the one from the other: or there may be an idiosyncracy, a peculiarity in your constitution of soul (as there is in the bodily constitution of many) by reason whereof that employment is deadly to *you*, which another may safely follow. So I am convinced from many experiments, I could not study to any degree of perfection, either mathematics, arithmetic, or algebra, without being a Deist, if not an Atheist. And yet others may study them all their lives, without sustaining any inconvenience. None therefore

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can here determine for another, but every man must judge for himself, and abstain from whatever he in particular finds to be hurtful to his soul.

3. We are, thirdly, to *gain all we can*, without hurting our neighbour. But this we may not, cannot do, if we love our neighbour as ourselves. We cannot, if we love every one as ourselves, hurt any one *in his substance*. We cannot devour the increase of his lands, and perhaps the lands and houses themselves, by gaming, by over-grown bills (whether on account of physic, or law, or any thing else) or by requiring or taking such interest, as even the laws of our country forbid. Hereby all *pawn-broking* is excluded: seeing whatever good we might do thereby, all unprejudiced men see with grief, it is abundantly overballanced by the evil. And if it were otherwise, yet we are not allowed, to *do evil that good may come*. We cannot, consistent with brotherly love, sell our goods below the market-price. We cannot study to ruin our neighbour's trade, in order to advance our own. Much less can we entice away, or receive any of his servants or workmen whom he has need of. None can gain, by swallowing up his neighbour's substance, without gaining the damnation of hell.

4. Neither may we gain, by hurting our neighbour *in his body*. Therefore we may not sell any thing which tends to impair health. Such is eminently all that liquid fire, commonly called *drams*

or

or *ſpirituous liquors*. It is true, theſe may have a place in medicine: they may be of uſe, in ſome bodily diſorders: (altho' there would rarely be occaſion for them, were it not for the unſkilfulneſs of the practitioner.) Therefore ſuch as prepare and ſell them *only for this end*, may keep their conſcience clear. But who are they? Who prepare and ſell them *only for this end?* Do you know ten ſuch diſtillers in *England?* Then excuſe theſe. * But all who ſell them in the common way, to any that will buy, are poiſoners-general. They murder his Majeſty's ſubjects by wholeſale, neither does their eye pity or ſpare. They drive them to hell, like ſheep: and what is their gain? Is it not the blood of theſe men? Who then would envy their large eſtates and ſumptuous palaces? A curſe is in the midſt of them: the curſe of God cleaves to the ſtones, the timber, the furniture of them. The curſe of God is in their gardens, their walks, their groves; a fire that burns to the nethermoſt hell. Blood, blood is there: the foundation, the floor, the walls, the roof are ſtained with blood! And canſt thou hope, O thou man of blood, tho' thou art *clothed in* ſcarlet *and fine linen, and fareſt ſumptuouſly every day:* canſt thou hope to deliver down thy *fields of blood*, to the third generation? Not ſo; for there is a God in heaven: therefore thy name ſhall ſoon be rooted out. Like as thoſe whom thou haſt deſtroyed, body and ſoul, *thy memorial ſhall periſh with thee.*

5. And

5. And are not they partakers of the same guilt, tho' in a lower degree, whether surgeons, apothecaries or physicians, who play with the lives or health of men, to enlarge their own gain? Who purposely lengthen the pain or disease, which they are able to remove speedily? Who protract the cure of their patient's body, in order to plunder his substance? Can any man be clear before God who does not shorten every disorder, *as much as he can*, and remove all sickness and pain, *as soon as he can?* He cannot: for nothing can be more clear, than that he does not *love his neighbour as himself*; than that he does not *do unto others, as he would they should do unto* himself.

6. This is dear-bought gain. And so is whatever is procured, by hurting our neighbour *in his soul:* by ministring, suppose, either directly or indirectly to his unchastity or intemperance; which certainly none can do, who has any fear of God, or any real desire of pleasing him. It nearly concerns all those to consider this, who have any thing to do with taverns, victualling-houses, opera-houses, play-houses, or any other places of public, fashionable diversion. If these profit the souls of men, you are clear; your employment is good, and your gain innocent. But if they are either sinful in themselves, or natural inlets to sin of various kinds, then it is to be feared, you have a sad account to make. O beware lest God say in that day, *These have perished*

in their iniquity, but their blood do I require at thy hands!

7. Theſe cautions and reſtrictions being obſerved, it is the bounden duty of all who are engaged in worldly buſineſs, to obſerve that firſt and great rule of Chriſtian wiſdom with reſpect to money, *Gain all you can.* Gain all you can by honeſt induſtry: uſe all poſſible diligence in your calling. Loſe no time: if you underſtand yourſelf and your relation to God and man, you know you have none to ſpare. If you underſtand your particular calling as you ought, you will have no time that hangs upon your hands. Every buſineſs will afford ſome employment ſufficient for every day and every hour. That wherein *you* are placed, if you follow it in earneſt, will leave you no leiſure for ſilly, unprofitable diverſions. You have always ſomething better to do, ſomething that will profit you, more or leſs. And *whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.* Do it *as ſoon* as poſſible: no delay! No putting off from day to day, or from hour to hour. Never leave any thing 'till to-morrow, which you can do to-day. And do it *as well* as poſſible. Do not ſleep or yawn over it: put your whole ſtrength to the work. Spare no pains. Let nothing be done by halves, or in a ſlight and careleſs manner. Let nothing in your buſineſs be left undone, if it can be done by labour or patience.

8. Gain

3. Gain *all you can*, by common ſenſe, by uſing in your buſineſs all the underſtanding which God has given you. It is amazing to obſerve, how few do this: how men run on in the ſame dull track with their foreſathers. But whatever they do who know not God, this is no rule for *you*. It is a ſhame for a Chriſtian, not to improve upon *them*, in whatever he takes in hand. *You* ſhould be continually learning, from the experience of others, or from your own experience, reading and reflection, to do every thing you have to do better to-day, than you did yeſterday. And ſee that you practiſe whatever you learn, that you may make the beſt of all that is in your hands.

II. 1. Having gained all you can, by honeſt wiſdom, and unwearied diligence, the ſecond rule of Chriſtian prudence is, *Save all you can*. Do not throw the precious talent into the ſea: leave that folly to Heathen philoſophers. Do not throw it away in idle expences, which is juſt the ſame as throwing it into the ſea. Expend no part of it merely to gratify the deſire of the fleſh, the deſire of the eye, or the pride of life.

2. Do not waſte any part of ſo precious a talent, merely in gratifying the deſires of the fleſh; in procuring the pleaſures of ſenſe of whatever kind; particularly, in enlarging the pleaſure of taſting. I do not mean, avoid glut-

tony and drunkenneſs only: an honeſt Heathen would condemn theſe. But there is a regular, reputable, kind of ſenſuality, an elegant epicuriſm, which does not immediately diſorder the ſtomach, nor (ſenſibly at leaſt) impair the underſtanding. And yet (to mention no other effects of it now) it cannot be maintained without conſiderable expence. Cut off all this expence: deſpiſe delicacy and variety, and be content with what plain nature requires.

3. Do not waſte any part of ſo precious a talent, merely in gratifying the deſire of the eye, by ſuperfluous or expenſive apparel, or by needleſs ornaments. Waſte no part of it in curiouſly adorning your houſes, in ſuperfluous or expenſive furniture: in coſtly pictures, painting, gilding, books: in elegant (rather than uſeful) gardens. Let your neighbours, who know nothing better, do this: *Let the dead bury their dead.* But *what is that to thee*, ſays our Lord? *Follow thou me.* Are you willing? Then you are able ſo to do.

4. Lay out nothing to gratify the pride of life, to gain the admiration or praiſe of men. This motive of expence is frequently interwoven with one or both of the former. Men are expenſive in diet, or apparel or furniture, not barely to pleaſe their appetite, or to gratify their eye, their imagination, but their vanity too. *So long as thou doſt well unto thyſelf, men will ſpeak good of thee.* So long as thou art *cloath-*

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ed in purple and fine linen, and fareſt ſumptuouſly every day, no doubt many will applaud thy elegance of taſte, thy generoſity and hoſpitality. But do not buy their applauſe ſo dear. Rather be content with the honour that cometh from God.

5. Who would expend any thing in gratifying theſe deſires, if he conſidered, that to gratify them is to increaſe them? Nothing can be more certain than this: daily experience ſhews, the more they are indulged, they increaſe the more. Whenever therefore you expend any thing to pleaſe your taſte or other ſenſes, you pay ſo much for ſenſuality. When you lay out money to pleaſe your eye, you give ſo much for an increaſe of curioſity, for a ſtronger attachment to theſe pleaſures, which periſh in the uſing. While you are purchaſing any thing which men uſe to applaud, you are purchaſing more vanity. Had you not then enough of vanity, ſenſuality, curioſity before? Was there need of any addition? And would you pay for it too? What manner of wiſdom is this? Would not the literally throwing your money into the ſea, be a leſs miſchievous folly?

6. * And why ſhould you throw away money upon your children, any more than upon yourſelf, in delicate food, in gay or coſtly apparel, in ſurperfluities of any kind? Why ſhould you purchaſe for them, more pride or luſt, more vanity, or fooliſh and hurtful deſires? They do

not want any more: they have enough already: nature has made ample provision for them. Why should you be at farther expence, to increase their temptations and snares, and to *pierce them thro' with* more *sorrows?*

7. * Do not *leave it* to them, to throw away. If you have good reason to believe, they would waste what is now in your possession, in gratifying and thereby increasing, the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life; at the peril of theirs and your own soul, do not set these traps in their way. Do not offer your sons or your daughters unto Belial, any more than unto Moloch. Have pity upon them and remove out of their way, what you may easily foresee, would increase their sins, and consequently plunge them deeper into everlasting perdition. How amazing then is the infatuation of those parents, who think they can never leave their children enough? What! cannot you leave them enough of arrows, fire-brands, and death? Not enough of foolish and hurtful desires? Not enough of pride, lust, ambition, vanity? Not enough of everlasting burnings! Poor wretch! Thou fearest were no fear is. Surely both thou and they, when ye are lifting up your eyes in hell, will have enough both of *the worm that never dieth*, and of *the fire that never shall be quenched.*

8. * "What then would you do, if you was in my case? If you had a considerable fortune

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to leave?" Whether I *would* do it, or no, I know what I *ought* to do: this will admit of no reasonable question. If I had one child, elder or younger, who knew the value of money, one who I believed would put it to the true use, I should think it my absolute, indispensable duty, to leave that child the bulk of my fortune; and to the rest just so much as would enable them to live in the manner they had been accustomed to do. "But what if all your children were equally ignorant of the true use of money?" I ought then (hard saying, who can hear it?) to give each what would keep him above want: and to bestow all the rest in such a manner as I judged would be most for the glory of God.

III. 1. But let not any man imagine, that he has done any thing, barely by going thus far, by *gaining* and *saving all he can*, if he were to stop here. All this is nothing, if a man go not forward, if he does not point all this at a farther end. Nor indeed can a man properly be said, to *save* any thing, if he only *lays it up*. You may as well throw your money into the sea, as bury it in the earth. And you may as well bury it in the earth, as in your chest, or in the *Bank* of *England*. Not to use, is effectually to throw it away. If therefore you would indeed *make yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness*, add the third rule to the two preceding. Having first

gained all you can, and ſecondly ſaved all you can, then give all you can.

2. * In order to ſee the ground and reaſon of this, conſider, when the Poſſeſſor of heaven and earth brought you into being and placed you in this world, he placed you here not as a proprietor, but a ſteward. As ſuch he intruſted you for a ſeaſon with goods of various kinds. But the ſole property of theſe ſtill reſts in him, nor can ever be alienated from him. As you yourſelf are not your own, but his, ſuch is likewiſe all that you enjoy. Such is your ſoul, and your body, not your own, but God's. And ſo is your ſubſtance in particular. And he has told you in the moſt clear and expreſs terms, how you are to employ it for him, in ſuch a manner, that it may be all an holy ſacrifice, acceptable thro' Chriſt Jeſus. And this light, eaſy ſervice he has promiſed to reward with an eternal weight of glory.

3. * The directions which God has given us, touching the uſe of our worldly ſubſtance, may be comprized in the following particulars. If you deſire to be a faithful and a wiſe ſteward, out of that portion of your Lord's goods, which he has for the preſent lodged in your hands, but with the right of reſuming whenever it pleaſes him, firſt, provide things needful for yourſelf, food to eat, raiment to put on, whatever nature moderately requires, for preſerving the body in health and ſtrength: ſecondly, provide theſe for your

your wife, your children, your servants, or any others who pertain to your household. If when this is done, there be an overplus left, then *do good to them that are of the household of faith.* If there be an overplus still, *as you have opportunity, do good unto all men.* In so doing, you *give all you can:* nay, in a sound sense, all you have: for all that is laid out in this manner, is really given to God. You *render unto* God *the things that are* God's, not only by what you give to the poor, but also by that which you expend in providing things needful for yourself and your household.

4.* If then a doubt should at any time arise in your mind, concerning what you are going to expend, either on yourself or any part of your family, you have an easy way to remove it. Calmly and seriously enquire, 1. In expending this, am I acting according to my character? Am I acting herein, not as a proprietor, but as a steward of my Lord's goods? 2. Am I doing this in obedience to his word? In what scripture does he require me so to do? 3. Can I offer up this action, this expence, as a sacrifice to God thro' Jesus Christ? 4. Have I reason to believe, that for this very work I shall have a reward at the resurrection of the just? You will seldom need any thing more to remove any doubt which arises on this head; but by this fourfold consideration you will receive clear light as to the way wherein you should go.

5. If any doubt ſtill remain, you may farther examine yourſelf by prayer, according to thoſe heads of enquiry. Try whether you can ſay to the Searcher of hearts, your conſcience not condemning you, "Lord, thou ſeeſt, I am going to expend this ſum, on that food, apparel, furniture. And thou knoweſt, I act therein with a ſingle eye, as a ſteward of thy goods, expending this portion of them thus, in purſuance of the deſign thou hadſt in intruſting me with them. Thou knoweſt I do this, in obedience to thy word, as thou commandeſt, and becauſe thou commandeſt it. Let this, I beſeech thee, be an holy ſacrifice, acceptable thro' Jeſus Chriſt! And give me a witneſs in myſelf, that for this labour of love, I ſhall have a recompence, when thou rewardeſt every man according to his works." Now if your conſcience bear you witneſs in the Holy Ghoſt, that this prayer is well pleaſing to God, then have you no reaſon to doubt, but that expence is right and good, and ſuch as will never make you aſhamed.

6. You ſee then what it is, to *make yourſelves friends of the mammon of unrighteouſneſs*, and by what means you may procure, *that when ye fail they may receive you into the everlaſting habitations.* You ſee the nature and extent of truly Chriſtian prudence, ſo far as it relates to the uſe of that great talent, money. *Gain all you can*, without hurting either yourſelf or your neighbour, in ſoul or body; by applying hereto with unintermitted diligence,

diligence, and with all the underſtanding which God has given you. *Save all you can*, by cutting off every expence, which ſerves only to indulge fooliſh deſire: to gratify either the deſire of the fleſh, the deſire of the eye, or the pride of life. Waſte nothing, living or dying, on ſin or folly, whether for your yourſelf or your children. And then *Give all you can*, or in other words give all you have to God. Do not ſtint yourſelf, like a Jew rather than a Chriſtian to this or that proportion. *Render unto* God, not a tenth, not a third, not half; but *all that is* God's, be it more or leſs: by employing all, on yourſelf, your houſhould, the houſhold of faith and all mankind, in ſuch a manner, that you may give a good account of your ſtewardſhip, when ye can be no longer ſtewards: in ſuch a manner as the oracles of God direct, both by general and particular precepts: in ſuch a manner, that whatever ye do may be *a ſacrifice of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour to* God; and that every act may be rewarded in that day, when the Lord cometh with all his ſaints.

7. Brethren, can we be either wiſe or faithful ſtewards, unleſs we thus manage our Lord's goods? We cannot; as not only the oracles of God, but our own conſcience beareth witneſs. Then why ſhould we delay? Why ſhould we conſer any longer with fleſh and blood, or men of the world? Our kingdom, our wiſdom *is not of this world*: Heathen cuſtom is nothing to us,

We follow no men any farther, than they are followers of Chriſt. Hear ye him: yea, to-day, while it is called to-day, hear and obey his voice. At this hour and from this hour, do his will: fulfil his word, in this and in all things. I intreat you, in the name of the Lord Jeſus, act up to the dignity of your calling. No more ſloth! Whatſoever your hand findeth to do, do it with your might. No more waſte! Cut off every expence which faſhion, caprice, or fleſh and blood demand. No more coveteouſneſs! But employ whatever God has intruſted you with, in doing good, all poſſible good, in every poſſible kind and degree, to the houſhold of faith, to all men. This is no ſmall part of *the wiſdom of the juſt*: give all ye have, as well as all ye are, a ſpiritual ſacrifice to him, who with-held not from you his Son, his only Son: ſo *laying up in ſtore for yourſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that ye may attain eternal life.*

SERMON

SERMON LI.

THE GOOD STEWARD.

LUKE xvi. 2.

Give an account of thy ſtewardſhip; for thou canſt be no longer ſteward.

1. THE relation which man bears to God, the creature to his Creator, is exhibited to us in the oracles of God under various repreſentations. Conſidered as a ſinner, a fallen creature, he is there repreſented as a *debtor* to his Creator. He is alſo frequently repreſented as a *ſervant*, which indeed is eſſential to him as a creature: inſomuch that this appellation is given to the Son of God when in his ſtate of humiliation: he *took upon him the form of a ſervant, being made in the likeneſs of men.*

2. But no character more exactly agrees with the preſent ſtate of man than that of a *ſteward*. Our bleſſed Lord frequently repreſents him as ſuch; and there is a peculiar propriety in the repreſentation. It is only in one particular reſpect, namely, as he is a ſinner, that he is ſtiled a *debtor*. And when he is ſtiled a *ſervant*, the appellation

lation is general and indeterminate. But a *ſteward* is a ſervant of a particular kind: ſuch a one as man is in all reſpects. This appellation is exactly expreſſive of his ſituation in the preſent world; ſpecifying what kind of ſervant he is to God, and what kind of ſervice his divine Maſter expects from him.

It may be of uſe then to conſider this point throughly, and to make our full improvement of it. In order to this, let us, firſt, inquire, in what reſpects we are now God's *ſtewards*. Let us, ſecondly, obſerve, that when he requires our ſouls of us, we *can be no longer ſtewards*. It will then only remain, as we may in the third place, obſerve, to *give an account of* our *ſtewardſhip*.

I. 1. And firſt, we are to enquire, in what reſpects we are now God's *ſtewards*. We are now indebted to him for all we have; but although a debtor is obliged to return what he has received, yet until the time of payment comes, he is at liberty to uſe it as he pleaſes. It is not ſo with a ſteward; he is not at liberty to uſe what is lodged in his hands, as *he* pleaſes, but as his maſter pleaſes. He has no right to diſpoſe of any thing which is in his hands, but according to the will of his Lord. For he is not the proprietor of any of theſe things, but barely intruſted with them by another: and intruſted on this expreſs condition, that he ſhall diſpoſe of all as his maſter orders.

Now,

Now this is exactly the case of every man, with relation to God. We are not at liberty to use what he has lodged in our hands, as *we* please, but as he pleases who alone is the possessor of heaven and earth, and the Lord of every creature. We have no right to dispose of any thing we have, but according to his will, seeing we are not proprietors of any of these things: they are all, as our Lord speaks, ἀλλότρια, *belonging to another person*; nor is any thing properly *our own*, in the land of our pilgrimage. We shall not receive τὰ ἴδια *our own things*, 'till we come to our own country. Eternal things only are our own: with all these temporal things we are barely intrusted by another; the Disposer and Lord of all. And he intrusts us with them on this express condition, that we use them only as our master's goods, and according to the particular directions, which he has given us in his word.

2. On this condition he hath intrusted us with our souls, our bodies, our goods, and whatever other talents we have received. But in order to impress this weighty truth on our hearts, it will be needful to come to particulars.

And first, God has intrusted us with our *soul*, an immortal spirit, made in the image of God, together with all the powers and faculties thereof, understanding, imagination, memory; will, and a train of affections, either included in it, or closely dependent upon it; love and hatred, joy and sorrow, respecting present good and evil; de-

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fire and averſion, hope and fear, reſpecting that which is to come. All theſe St. *Paul* ſeems to include in two words, when he ſays, *The peace of God ſhall keep your* hearts *and* minds. Perhaps indeed the latter word, νοηματα, might rather be rendered *thoughts:* provided we take that word in its moſt extenſive ſenſe, for every perception of the mind, whether active or paſſive.

3. Now of all theſe, it is certain, we are only ſtewards. God has intruſted us with theſe powers and faculties, not that we may employ them according to our own will, but according to the expreſs orders which he has given us: (although it is true, that in doing his will, we moſt effectually ſecure our own happineſs, ſeeing it is herein only that we can be happy, either in time, or in eternity.) Thus, we are to uſe our underſtanding, our imagination, our memory, wholly to the glory of him that gave them. Thus our will is to be wholly given up to him, and all our affections to be regulated as he directs. We are to love and hate, to rejoice and grieve, to deſire and ſhun, to hope and fear, according to the rule which he preſcribes, whoſe we are, and whom we are to ſerve in all things. Even our thoughts are not our own in this ſenſe: they are not at our own diſpoſal: but for every deliberate motion of our mind, we are accountable to our great Maſter.

4. God has, ſecondly, intruſted us with our *bodies*, (thoſe exquiſitely wrought machines, ſo *fearfully*

fearfully and wonderfully made) with all the powers and members thereof. He has intrusted us with the organs of *sense*, of sight, hearing, and the rest: but none of these are given us as our own, to be employed according to our own will. None of these are *lent* us in such a sense, as to leave us at liberty to use them as we please for a season. No: we have received them on these very terms, that as long as they abide with us, we should employ them all, in that very manner, and no other which he appoints.

5. It is on the same terms, that he imparted to us that most excellent talent of *speech*. *Thou hast given me a tongue*, says the antient writer, *that I may praise thee therewith*. For this purpose was it given to all the children of men, to be employed in glorifying God. Nothing therefore is more ungrateful, or more absurd, than to think or say, *our tongues are our own*. That cannot be, unless we have created ourselves, and so are independent on the Most High. Nay, but *it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves*. The manifest consequence is, that he is still *Lord over us*, in this, as in all other respects. It follows, that there is not a word of our tongue, for which we are not accountable to him.

6. To him we are equally accountable for the use of our *hands* and *feet*, and all the *members* of our body. These are so many talents which are committed to our trust, until the time appointed

pointed by the Father. Until then, we have the uſe of all theſe; but as ſtewards, not as proprietors; to the end, we ſhould *render them not as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin, but as inſtruments of righteouſneſs unto God.*

7. God has intruſted us, thirdly, with a portion of *worldly goods*, with food to eat, raiment to put on, and a place where to lay our head, with not only the neceſſaries, but the conveniencies of life. Above all, he has committed to our charge that precious talent, which contains all the reſt, *money*: indeed it is unſpeakably precious, if we are *wiſe and faithful ſtewards* of it: if we employ every part of it for ſuch purpoſes as our bleſſed Lord has commanded us to do.

8. God has intruſted us, fourthly, with ſeveral talents, which do not properly come under any of theſe heads: ſuch is bodily *ſtrength*: ſuch are *health*, a pleaſing *perſon*, an agreeable *addreſs*: ſuch are *learning* and *knowledge* in their various degrees, with all the other advantages of *education*. Such is the *influence* which we have over others, whether by their *love* and *eſteem* of us, or by *power*: power to do them good or hurt, to help or hinder them in the circumſtances of life. Add to theſe that invaluable talent of *time*, with which God intruſts us from moment to moment. Add, laſtly, that on which all the reſt depend, and without which they would all be curſes, not bleſſings: namely, the *grace* of God,

God, the power of his holy Spirit, which alone worketh in us all that is acceptable in his ſight.

II. 1. * In ſo many reſpects are the children of men, ſtewards of the Lord, *the Poſſeſſor of heaven and earth.* So large a portion of his goods, of various kinds, hath he committed to their charge. But it is not for ever, nor indeed for any conſiderable time. We have this truſt repoſed in us, only during the ſhort, uncertain ſpace that we ſojourn here below: only ſo long as we remain on earth, as this fleeting breath is in our noſtrils. The hour is ſwiftly approaching, it is juſt at hand, when we *can be no longer ſtewards.* The moment the body *returns to the duſt as it was, and the ſpirit to God that gave it,* we bear that character no more; the time of our ſtewardſhip is at an end. Part of thoſe goods wherewith we were before intruſted, are now come to an end: at leaſt, they are ſo with regard to *us*: nor are we longer intruſted with them: and that part which remains, can no longer be employed or improved as it was before.

2. * Part of what we were intruſted with before, is at an end, at leaſt with regard to us. What have we to do, after this life, with food, and raiment, and houſes, and earthly poſſeſſions? The food of the dead is the duſt of the earth: they are cloathed only with worms and rottenneſs. They dwell in *the houſe prepared*

for

for all flesh: their lands know them no more. All their worldly goods are delivered into other hands, and they have *no more portion under the sun.*

3. The case is the same with regard to the *body.* The moment the spirit returns to God, we are no longer stewards of this machine, which is then sown in corruption and dishonour. All the parts and members of which it was compos-ed, lie mouldering in the clay. The hands have no longer power to move; the feet have forgot their office: the flesh, sinews, the bones, are all hasting to be dissolved into common dust.

4. Here end also the talents of a *mixt* nature, our *strength*; our *health*; our *beauty*; our *eloquence*, and *address*; our faculty of pleasing, of persuading, or convincing others. Here end likewise all the *honours* we once enjoyed, all the *power* which was lodged in our hands, all the *influence* which we once had over others, either by the love or the esteem which they bore us. *Our love, our hatred, our desire is perished:* none regard how we were once affected toward them. They look upon the dead as neither able to help nor hurt them; so that a *living dog is better than a dead lion.*

5. * Perhaps a doubt may remain concerning some of the other talents wherewith we are now intrusted, whether they will cease to exist when the body returns to dust, or only cease to be improvable. Indeed there is no doubt, but the-

kind

kind of *ſpeech* which we now uſe, by means of theſe bodily organs, will then be intirely at an end, when thoſe organs are deſtroyed. It is certain the tongue will no more occaſion any vibrations in the air: neither will the ear convey theſe tremulous motions to the common ſenſory. Even the *ſonus exilis*, the low, ſhrill voice, which the poet ſuppoſes to belong to a ſeparate ſpirit, we cannot allow to have a real being; it is a mere flight of imagination. Indeed it cannot be queſtioned, but ſeparate ſpirits have ſome way to communicate their ſentiments to each other: but what inhabitant of fleſh and blood can explain that way? What we term *ſpeech*, they cannot have. So that we can no longer be ſteward of this talent, when we are numbered with the dead.

6. * It may likewiſe admit of a doubt, whether our *ſenſes* will exiſt, when the organs of ſenſe are deſtroyed. Is it not probable, that thoſe of the lower kind will ceaſe; the feeling, the ſmell, the taſte, as they have a more immediate reference to the body, and are chiefly, if not wholly intended for the preſervation of it? But will not ſome kind of *ſight* remain, although the eye be cloſed in death? And will there not be ſomething in the ſoul, equivalent to the preſent ſenſe of *hearing?* Nay, is it not probable, that theſe will not only exiſt in the ſeparate ſtate, but exiſt in a far greater degree, in a more eminent manner

ner than now! When the ſoul, diſintangled from its clay, is no longer.

" A dying ſparkle in a cloudy place;
when it no longer
" Looks thro' the windows of the eye and ear."

But rather is all eye, all ear, all ſenſe, in a manner we cannot yet conceive. And have we not a clear proof of the poſſibility of this, of ſeeing without the uſe of the eye, and hearing without the uſe of the ear? Yea, and an earneſt of it continually? For does not the ſoul ſee, in the cleareſt manner, when the eye is of no uſe, namely, in dreams? Does ſhe not then enjoy the faculty of hearing, without any help from the ear? But however this be, certain it is, that neither will our *ſenſes*, any more than our *ſpeech*, be intruſted to us in the manner they are now, when the body lies in the ſilent grave.

7. * How far the *knowledge* or *learning* which we have gained by *education* will then remain, we cannot tell. *Solomon* indeed ſays, *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom, in the grave whither thou goeſt.* But it is evident, theſe words cannot be underſtood in an abſolute ſenſe. For it is ſo far from being true, that there is *no knowledge* after we have quitted the body, that the doubt lies on the other ſide, whether there be any ſuch thing as real knowledge

ledge till then? Whether it be not a plain ſober truth, not a mere poetical fiction,

That "all theſe ſhadows which for things we take,
Are but the empty dreams, which in death's ſleep we make?

Only excepting thoſe things which God himſelf has been pleaſed to reveal to man. I will ſpeak for one: after having ſought for truth with ſome diligence for half a century, I am at this day hardly ſure of any thing, but what I learn from the bible. Nay, I poſitively affirm, I *know nothing* elſe ſo certainly, that I would dare to ſtake my ſalvation upon it.

So much however we may learn from *Solomon's* words, that *that there is no* ſuch *knowledge* or *wiſdom in the grave*, as will be of any uſe to an unhappy ſpirit; there *is no device* there, whereby he can now improve thoſe talents, with which he was once intruſted. For *time* is no more: the time of our trial for everlaſting happineſs or miſery is paſt. *Our day*, the day of man, is over; *the day of ſalvation is ended.* Nothing now remains but the day of the Lord, uſhering in, wide, unchangeable eternity.

8. But ſtill our ſouls, being incorruptible and immortal, of a nature *little lower than the angels*, (even if we are to underſtand that phraſe of our original nature, which may well admit of a doubt) when

when our bodies are mouldered into earth, will remain with all their faculties. Our *memory*, our *underſtanding* will be ſo far from being deſtroyed, yea, or impaired by the diſſolution of the body, that on the contrary, we have reaſon to believe, they will be inconceivably ſtrengthned. Have we not the cleareſt reaſon to believe, that they will then be wholly freed from thoſe defects, which now naturally reſult from the union of the ſoul with the corruptible body? It is highly probable, that from the time theſe are diſunited, our memory will let nothing ſlip: yea, that it will faithfully exhibit every thing to our view, which was ever committed to it. It is true, that the inviſible world is in ſcripture termed *the land of forgetfulneſs*; or as it is ſtill more ſtrongly expreſſed in the old tranſlation, *the land where all things are forgotten.* They are forgotten; but by whom? Not by the inhabitants of that land, but by the inhabitants of the earth. It is with regard to them that the unſeen world is *the land of forgetfulneſs. All things* therein *are* too frequently forgotten by theſe; but not by diſembodied ſpirits. From the time they have put off the earthly tabernacle, we can hardly think they forget any thing.

9. * In like manner the *underſtanding* will doubtleſs be freed, from the defects that are now inſeparable from it. For many ages it has been an unqueſtioned maxim, *Humanum eſt errare & neſcire:* Ignorance and miſtake are inſeparable from

from human nature. But the whole of this assertion is only true, with regard to living men, and holds no longer, than while *the corruptible body presses down the soul.* Ignorance indeed belongs to every finite understanding, seeing there is none beside God that knoweth all things: but not mistake. When the body is laid aside, this also is laid aside for ever.

10. What then can we say of an ingenious man, who has lately made a discovery, that disembodied spirits have not only no *senses* (not even in sight or hearing) but no *memory* or *understanding*, no *thought* or perception, not so much as a *consciousness* of their own existence? That they are in a dead sleep from death to the resurrection? *Consanguineus lethi sopor* indeed! Such a sleep we may well call *a near kinsman of death*, if it be not the same thing. What can we say, but that ingenious men have strange dreams: and these they sometimes mistake for realities.

11. But to return. As the soul will retain its understanding and memory, notwithstanding the dissolution of the body, so undoubtedly the *will*, including all the *affections*, will remain in its full vigour. If our love or anger, our hope or desire perish, it is only with regard to those whom we leave behind. To them it matters not, whether they were the objects of our love or hate, of our desire or aversion. But in separate spirits themselves, we have no reason to believe,

that any of these are extinguished. It is more probable, that they work with far greater force, than while the soul was clogged with flesh and blood.

12. But although all these, although both our knowledge and senses, our memory and understanding, together with our will, our love, hate, and all our affections, remain after the body is dropt off, yet in this respect they are as though they were not, we are no longer stewards of them. The things continue, but our stewardship does not: we no more act in that capacity. Even the *grace* which was formerly intrusted with us, in order to enable us to be faithful and wise stewards, is now no longer intrusted for that purpose. The days of our stewardship are ended.

III. 2. It now remains, that being *no longer stewards*, we *give an account* of our *stewardship*. Some have imagined, this is to be done immediately after death, as soon as we enter into the world of spirits. Nay, the church of *Rome* does absolutely assert this; yea, makes it an article of faith. And thus much we may allow, the moment a soul drops the body, and stands naked before God, it cannot but know what its portion will be to all eternity. It will have full in its view, either everlasting joy, or everlasting torment: as it is no longer possible for us to be deceived, in the judgment which we pass upon ourselves.

ourſelves. But the ſcripture gives us no reaſon to believe, that God will then ſit in judgment upon us. There is no paſſage in all the oracles of God, which affirms any ſuch thing. That which has been frequently alledged for this purpoſe, ſeems rather to prove the contrary: namely, (*Heb.* ix. 27.) *It is appointed for men once to die, and after this, the judgment.* For in all reaſon, the word *once* is here to be applied, to judgment as well as death. So that the fair inference to be drawn from this very text, is, not that there are two judgments, a particular and a general: but that we are to be judged as well as to die, once only: not once immediately after death, and again after the general reſurrection; but then only *when the Son of Man ſhall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him.* The imagination therefore of one judgment at death, and another at the end of the world, can have no place with thoſe who make the written word of God, the whole and ſole ſtandard of their faith.

2. The time then when we are to give this account, is when the *great white throne comes down from heaven, and he that ſitteth thereon, from whoſe face the heavens and the earth flee away, and there is found no place for them.* It is then *the dead, ſmall and great,* will *ſtand before God: and the books* will be *opened*; the book of ſcripture, to them who were entruſted therewith, the book of conſcience to all mankind. The *book of remembrance* likewiſe, (to uſe another

ſcriptural expreſſion) which had been written from the foundation of the world, will then be laid open to the view of all the children of men. Before all theſe, even the whole human race, before the devil and his angels, before an innumerable company of holy angels, and before God, the Judge of all: thou wilt appear, without any ſhelter or covering, without any poſſibility of diſguiſe, to give a particular account of the manner wherein thou haſt employed all thy Lord's goods.

3. The judge of all will then enquire, "How didſt thou employ thy *ſoul?* I intruſted thee with an immortal ſpirit, endowed with various powers and faculties, with *underſtanding*, *imagination*, *memory*, *will*, *affections*. I gave thee withal full and expreſs directions, how all theſe were to be employed. Didſt thou employ thy *underſtanding*, as far as it was capable, according to thoſe directions, namely, in the knowledge of thyſelf and me? My nature, my attributes? My works, whether of creation, of providence, or of grace? In acquainting thyſelf with my word? In uſing every means to increaſe thy knowledge thereof? In meditating thereon day and night? Didſt thou employ thy *memory* according to my will? In treaſuring up whatever knowledge thou hadſt acquired, which might conduce to my glory, to thy own ſalvation, or the advantage of others? Didſt thou ſtore up therein, not things of no value, but whatever inſtruction

inſtruction thou hadſt learned from my word: and whatever experience thou hadſt gained, of my wiſdom, truth, power, and mercy? Was thy *imagination* employed, not in painting vain images, much leſs ſuch as nouriſhed *fooliſh and hurtful deſires*, but in repreſenting to thee whatever would profit thy ſoul, and awaken thy purſuit of wiſdom and holineſs? Didſt thou follow my directions with regard to thy *will?* Was it wholly given up to me? Was it ſwallowed up in mine, ſo as never to oppoſe, but always run parallel with it? Were thy *affections* placed and regulated in ſuch a manner, as I appointed in my word? Didſt thou give me thy heart? Didſt thou not love the world, neither the things of the world? Was I the object of thy love? Was all thy deſire unto me, and unto the remembrance of my name? Was I the joy of thy heart, the delight of thy ſoul, the chief among ten thouſand? Didſt thou ſorrow for nothing but what grieved my Spirit? Didſt thou fear and hate nothing but ſin? Did the whole ſtream of thy affections flow back to the ocean from whence they came? Were thy *thoughts* employed according to my will? Not in ranging to the ends of the earth, not on folly, or ſin: but on *whatſoever things were pure, whatſoever things were holy*, on whatſoever was conducive to my *glory*, and to *peace and good-will among men?*"

4. The Lord will then inquire, "How didſt thou employ the *body* wherewith I intruſted thee?

I gave thee a *tongue*, to praiſe me therewith: didſt thou uſe it to the end for which it was given? Didſt thou employ it, not in evil-ſpeaking or idle-ſpeaking, not in uncharitable or unprofitable converſation: but in ſuch as was good, as was neceſſary or uſeful, either to thyſelf or others? Such as always tended, directly or indirectly, to *miniſter grace to the hearers?* I gave thee, together with thy other *ſenſes*, thoſe grand avenues of knowledge, *ſight* and *hearing:* were theſe employed to thoſe excellent purpoſes for which they were beſtowed upon thee? In bringing thee in more and more inſtruction in righteouſneſs and true holineſs? I gave thee hands and feet and various *members* wherewith to perform the works which were prepared for thee: were they employed, not in doing *the will of the fleſh*, of thy evil nature, or *the will of the mind*, (the things to which thy reaſon or fancy led thee,) but *the will of him that ſent* thee into the world, merely to work out thy own ſalvation? Didſt thou preſent all thy members, not to ſin, as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs, but to me alone, through the Son of my love, *as inſtruments of righteouſneſs?*"

5. The Lord of all will next enquire, "How didſt thou employ the *worldly goods* which I lodged in thy hands? Didſt thou uſe thy food, not ſo as to ſeek or place thy happineſs therein, but ſo as to preſerve the body in health, in ſtrength, and vigour, a fit inſtrument for the ſoul?

ſoul? Didſt thou uſe apparel, not to nouriſh pride or vanity, much leſs to tempt others to ſin, but conveniently and decently to defend thyſelf from the injuries of the weather? Didſt thou prepare and uſe thy houſe and all other conveniencies, with a ſingle eye to my glory? In every point ſeeking not thy own honour, but mine: ſtudying to pleaſe not thyſelf, but me? Once more: in what manner didſt thou employ that comprehenſive talent *money?* Not in gratifying the deſire of the fleſh, the deſire of the eye, or the pride of life? Not ſquandering it away in vain expences, the ſame as throwing it into the ſea? Not hoarding it up to leave behind thee, the ſame as burying it in the earth? But firſt ſupplying thy own reaſonable wants, together with thoſe of thy family: then reſtoring the remainder to me, through the poor, whom I had appointed to receive it: looking upon thyſelf as only one of that number of poor, whoſe wants were to be ſupplied out of that part of my ſubſtance, which I had placed in thy hands for this purpoſe: leaving thee the right of being ſupplied firſt, and the bleſſedneſs of giving rather than receiving? Waſt thou accordingly a general benefactor to mankind? Feeding the hungery, cloathing the naked, comforting the ſick, aſſiſting the ſtranger, relieving the afflicted, according to their various neceſſities? Waſt thou eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame? A father to the fatherleſs, and an huſband to the

widow? And didſt thou labour to improve all outward works of mercy, as means of ſaving ſouls from death?"

6. Thy Lord will faarther enquire, "Haſt thou been a wife and faithful ſteward, with regard to the talents of a mixt nature which I lent thee? Didſt thou employ thy *health* and *ſtrength*, not in folly or ſin, not in the pleaſures which periſhed in the uſing, *not in making proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the deſires thereof*, but in a vigorous purſuit of that better part, which none could take away from thee? Didſt thou employ whatever was pleaſing in thy *perſon* or *addreſs*, whatever advantages thou hadſt by *education*, whatever ſhare of *learning*, whatever *knowledge* of things or men was committed to thee, for the promoting of virtue in the world, for the enlargement of my kingdom? Didſt thou employ whatever ſhare of *power* thou hadſt, whatever *influence* over others, by the love or eſteem of thee which they had conceived, for the increaſe of their wiſdom and holineſs? Didſt thou employ that ineſtimable talent of *time*, with warineſs and circumſpection, as duly weighing the value of every moment, and knowing that all were numbered in eternity? Above all, waſt thou a good ſteward of my *grace*, preventing, accompanying, and following thee? Didſt thou duly obſerve and carefully improve all the influences of my Spirit? Every good deſire? Every meaſure of light? All his ſharp or gentle reproofs? How didſt thou

thou profit by *the Spirit of Bondage and fear*, which was previous to *the Spirit of Adoption?* And when thou waſt made a partaker of this Spirit, *crying in thy heart, Abba, Father*, didſt thou ſtand faſt in the glorious liberty wherewith I made thee free? Didſt thou from thenceforth preſent thy ſoul and body, all thy thoughts, thy words and actions, in one flame of love, as an holy ſacrifice, glorifying me with thy body and thy ſpirit? Then *well-done, good and faithful ſervant! Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!* And what will remain, either to the faithful or unfaithful ſteward? Nothing but the execution of that ſentence, which has been paſſed by the righteous Judge; fixing thee in a ſtate which admits of no change, through everlaſting ages. It remains only, that thou be rewarded to all eternity, according to thy works.

IV. 1. From theſe plain conſiderations we may learn, firſt, How important is this ſhort, uncertain day of life! How precious, above all utterance, above all conception, is every portion of it!

" The leaſt of theſe a ſerious care demands;
" For tho' they're little, they are golden ſands!"

How deeply does it concern every child of man, to let none of theſe run to waſte; but to improve

them all to the nobleſt purpoſes, as long as the breath of God is in his noſtrils!

2. We learn from hence, ſecondly, that there is no employment of our time, no action or converſation that is purely *indifferent*. All is good or bad, becauſe all our time, as every thing we have, is *not our own*. All theſe are, as our Lord ſpeaks, τὰ ἀλλότρια, the property of another; of God, our Creator. Now theſe either are, or are not employed, according to his will. If they are ſo employed, all is good; if they are not, all is evil. Again: it is his will, that we ſhould continually grow in grace, and in the living knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Conſequently, every thought, word, and work whereby this knowledge is increaſed, whereby we grow in grace, is good: and every one whereby this knowledge is not increaſed, is truly and properly evil.

3. We learn from hence, thirdly, that there are no works of ſupererogation; that we can never do more than our duty: ſeeing all we have is not our own, but God's, all we can do is due to him. We have not received this or that, or many things only, but every thing from him: therefore every thing is his due. He that gives us all, muſt needs have a right to all. So that if we pay him any thing leſs than all, we cannot be *faithful ſtewards*. And conſidering *every man ſhall receive his own reward, according to his own* labour, we cannot be *wiſe ſtewards*, unleſs

unleſs we labour to the uttermoſt of our power; not leaving any thing undone, which we poſſibly can do, but putting forth all our ſtrength.

4. Brethren, *Who is an underſtanding man and endued with knowledge among you?* Let him ſhew the wiſdom from above; by walking ſuitably to his character. If he ſo account of himſelf, as a ſteward of the manifold gifts of God, let him ſee that all his thoughts, and words, and works be agreeable to the poſt God has aſſigned him. It is no ſmall thing, to lay out for God all which you have received from God. It requires all your wiſdom, all your reſolution, all your patience and conſtancy: far more than ever you had by nature: but not more than you may have by grace. For his grace is ſufficient for you, and *all things*, you know, *are poſſible to him that believeth*. By faith then, *put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; *put on the whole armour of God*, and you ſhall be enabled to glorify him in all your words and works, yea, to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Chriſt.

EDINBURGH,
May 14, 1768.

SERMON LII.†

PSALM xciv. 16.

Who will riſe up with me againſt the wicked?

1. IN all ages, men who neither feared God nor regarded man, have combined together and formed conſederacies, to carry on the works of darkneſs. And herein they have ſhewn themſelves wiſe in their generation; for by this means they more effectually promoted the kingdom of their father, the devil, than otherwiſe they could have done. On the other hand, men who did fear God and deſire the happineſs of their fellow-creatures, have in every age found it needful to join together, in order to oppoſe the works of darkneſs, to ſpread the knowledge of God their Saviour, and to promote his kingdom upon earth. Indeed he himſelf has inſtructed them ſo to do. From the time that men were upon the earth, he hath taught them to join together in his ſervice, and has united them in one body by one ſpirit. And for this very end he has joined them together, *that he might deſtroy the*

† Preached before the Society for Reformation of Manners, on Sunday, January 30, 1763, at the Chappel in Weſt-ſtreet, Seven Dials.

the works of the devil, firſt in them that are already united, and by them in all that are round about them.

2. This is the original deſign of the church of Chriſt. It is a body of men compacted together, in order firſt, to ſave each his own ſoul, then to aſſiſt each other in working out their ſalvation, and afterwards as far as in them lies, to ſave all men from preſent and future miſery, to overturn the kingdom of Satan, and ſet up the kingdom of Chriſt. And this ought to be the continued care and endeavour of every member of his church. Otherwiſe he is not worthy to be called a member thereof, as he is not a living member of Chriſt.

3. Accordingly this ought to be the conſtant care and endeavour of all thoſe, who are united together in theſe kingdoms, and are commonly called *The Church of England*. They are united together for this very end, to oppoſe the devil and all his works, and to wage war againſt the world and the fleſh, his conſtant and faithful allies. But do they in fact anſwer the end of their union? Are all who ſtile themſelves "members of the church of *England*" heartily engaged in oppoſing the works of the devil, and fighting againſt the world and the fleſh? Alas, we cannot ſay this. So far from it, that a great part, I fear, the greater part of them, are themſelves *the world*, the people that know not God, to any ſaving purpoſe: are indulging, day by day,

day, instead of *mortifying the flesh, with its affections and desires*; and doing themselves those works of the devil, which they are peculiarly engaged to destroy.

4. There is therefore still need, even in this *Christian country* (as we *courteously* stile *Great Britain*) yea, in this *Christian church* (if we may give that title to the bulk of our nation) of some to *rise up against the wicked*, and join together *against the evil-doers*. Nay, there was never more need than there is at this day, for *them that fear the Lord*, to *speak often together*, on this very head, how they may *lift up a standard against the iniquity* which overflows the land. There is abundant cause for all the servants of God, to join together against the works of the devil, with united hearts and counsels and endeavours, to make a stand for God, and to repress, as much as in them lies, these *floods of ungodliness*.

5. For this end a few persons in *London*, towards the close of the last century, united together, and after awhile were termed, "The Society for Reformation of Manners." And incredible good was done by them, for near forty years. But then most of the original members, being gone to their reward, those who succeeded them grew faint in their mind, and departed from the work. So that a few years ago the society ceased, nor did any of the kind remain in the kingdom.

6. It

6. It is a ſociety of the ſame nature, which has been lately formed. I purpoſe to ſhew, firſt, The nature of their deſign, and the *ſteps* they have hitherto taken; 2. The *excellency* of it, with the various *objections* which have been raiſed againſt it; 3. *What manner of men* they ought to be, who engage in ſuch a deſign; and 4. With what *ſpirit* and in what *manner* they ſhould proceed in the proſecution of it. I ſhall conclude with an *application* both to them, and to all that fear God.

I. 1. I am, firſt, to ſhew the *nature* of their deſign and the *ſteps* they have hitherto taken.

It was on a Lord's day in *Auguſt* 1757, that in a ſmall company, who were met for prayer and religious converſation, mention was made of the groſs and open profanation of that ſacred day, by perſons buying and ſelling, keeping open ſhop, tippling in ale-houſes, and ſtanding or ſitting in the ſtreets, roads or fields, vending their wares as on common days: eſpecially in *Moorfields*, which was then full of them every Sunday, from one end to the other. It was conſidered, what method could be taken, to redreſs theſe grievances? And it was agreed, that ſix of them ſhould in the morning wait upon Sir *John Fielding* for inſtruction. They did ſo. He approved of the deſign, and

and directed them how to carry it into execution.

2. They first delivered petitions to the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor and the court of Aldermen, to the Justices sitting at *Hick's-Hall*, and those in *Westminster-Hall*. And they received from all these honourable benches much encouragement to proceed.

3. It was next judged proper, to signify their design to many persons of eminent rank, and to the body of the clergy, as well as the ministers of other denominations, belonging to the several churches and meetings, in and about the cities of *London* and *Westminster*. And they had the satisfaction to meet with an hearty consent and universal approbation from them.

4. They then printed and dispersed, at their own expence, several thousand books of instruction, to constables and other parish-officers, explaining and inforcing their several duties. And to prevent, as far as possible, the necessity of proceeding to an actual execution of the laws, they likewise printed and dispersed, in all parts of the town, dissuasives from sabbath-breaking, extracts from acts of parliament against it, and notices to the offenders.

5. The way being paved by these precautions, it was in the beginning of the year 1758, that after notices delivered again and again, which were as often set at nought, actual informations were made to magistrates, against persons profaning

ſaning the Lord's day. By this means they firſt cleared the ſtreets and fields, of thoſe notorious offenders, who without any regard either to God or the King, were ſelling their wares from morning to night. They proceeded to a more difficult attempt, the preventing *tippling* on the Lord's day, ſpending the time in ale-houſes which ought to be ſpent in the more immediate worſhip of God. Herein they were expoſed to abundance of reproach, to inſult and abuſe of every kind: having not only the tipplers and thoſe who entertained them, the ale-houſe-keepers, to contend with, but rich and honourable men, partly the landlords of thoſe ale-houſe-keepers, partly thoſe who furniſhed them with drink, and in general all who gained by their ſins. Some of theſe were not only men of ſubſtance, but men of authority; nay, in more inſtances than one, they were the very perſons before whom the delinquents were brought. And the treatment they gave thoſe who laid the informations, naturally encouraged *the beaſts of the people*, to follow their example, and to uſe them as fellows not fit to live upon the earth. Hence they made no ſcruple, not only to treat them with the baſeſt language, not only to throw at them mud or ſtones or whatever came to hand, but many times to beat them without mercy, and to drag them over the ſtones, or through the kennels.

And

And that they did not murder them, was not for want of will; but the bridle was in their teeth.

6. Having therefore received help from God, they went on to reſtrain *Bakers* likewiſe, from ſpending ſo great a part of the Lord's day, in exerciſing the works of their calling. But many of theſe were more noble than the victuallers. They were ſo far from reſenting this, or looking upon it as an affront, that ſeveral who had been hurried down the ſtream of cuſtom, to act contrary to their own conſcience, ſincerely thanked them for their labour and acknowledged it as a real kindneſs.

7. In clearing the ſtreets, fields and alehouſes of ſabbath-breakers, they fell upon another ſort of offenders as miſchievous to ſociety as any, namely, *Gameſters* of various kinds. Some of theſe were of the loweſt and vileſt claſs, commonly called *gamblers*, who make a trade of ſeizing on young, and unexperienced men, and tricking them out of all their money. And after they have beggared them, they frequently teach them the ſame myſtery of iniquity. Several neſts of theſe they have rooted out, and conſtrained not a few of them, honeſtly to earn their bread by the ſweat of their brow, and the labour of their hands.

8. Increaſing

8. Increaſing in number and ſtrength, they extended their views, and began not only to repreſs *profane ſwearing*, but to remove out of our ſtreets, another public nuiſance and ſcandal of the Chriſtian name, *common proſtitutes*. Many of theſe were ſtopped in their mid career of audacious wickedneſs. And in order to go to the root of the diſeaſe, many of the *houſes* that entertained them, have been detected, proſecuted according to law, and totally ſuppreſſed. And ſome of the poor, deſolate women themſelves, tho' fallen to

" The loweſt line of human infamy"

have acknowledged the gracious providence of God, and broke off their ſins by laſting repentance. Several of theſe have been placed out, and ſeveral received into the *Magdalen Hoſpital*.

9. If a little digreſſion may be allowed, who can ſufficiently admire the wiſdom of Divine Providence, in the diſpoſal of the times and ſeaſons, ſo as to ſuit one occurrence to another? For inſtance. Juſt at a time when many of theſe poor creatures, being ſtopt in their courſe of ſin, found a deſire of leading a better life, as it were in anſwer to that ſad queſtion, " But if I quit the way I now am in, what can I do to live? For I am not miſtreſs of any trade; and I have no friends that will

receive

receive me:" I say, just at this time, God has prepared the *Magdalen Hospital*. Here those who have no trade, nor any friends to receive them, are received with all tenderness. Here they may live, and that with comfort; being provided with all things, that are needful *for life and godliness*.

10. But to return. The number of persons brought to justice, from *August* 1757, to *August* 1762 is 9596

From thence to the present time:

For unlawful gaming, and profane swearing,	40
For sabbath-breaking,	400
Lewd women and keepers of ill houses,	550
For offering to sale obscene prints,	2
In all	10,588

11. In the admission of members into the society, no regard is had to any particular sect or party. Whoever is found upon enquiry to be a good man, is readily admitted. And none who has selfish or pecuniary views, will long continue therein: not only because he can gain nothing thereby, because he would quickly be a loser: inasmuch as he must commence subscriber, as soon as he is a member. Indeed the vulgar cry is "These are all *Whitfelites*." But it is a great mistake. About twenty of the constantly subscribing members, are all that are in connexion with

with Mr. *Whitefield*. About fifty are in connexion with Mr. *Wesley*. About twenty, who are of the eſtabliſhed Church, have no connexion with either: and about ſeventy are diſſenters, who make in all an hundred and ſixty. There are indeed many more, who aſſiſt in the work by occaſional ſubſcriptions.

II. 1. Theſe are the ſteps which have been hitherto taken, in proſecution of this deſign. I am in the ſecond place, to ſhew, the *excellency* thereof, notwithſtanding the *objections* which have been raiſed againſt it. Now this may appear from ſeveral conſiderations. And firſt, from hence: That the making an open ſtand, againſt all the ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs, which overſpread our land as a flood, is one of the nobleſt ways of confeſſing Chriſt in the face of his enemies. It is giving glory to God, and ſhewing mankind, that even in theſe dregs of time

"There are, who faith preſer,
"Tho' few, and piety to God."

And what more excellent, than to render to God, the honour due unto his name? To declare by a ſtronger proof than words, even by ſuffering, and running all hazards, *Verily there is a reward for the righteous; doubtleſs there is a God that judgeth the earth.*

2. How

2. How excellent is the design, to prevent in any degree, the dishonour done to his glorious name, the contempt which is poured on his authority, and the scandal brought upon our holy religion, by the gross, flagrant wickedness of those who are still called by the name of Christ? To stem in any degree the torrent of vice, to repress the floods of ungodliness, to remove in any measure those occasions of blaspheming the worthy name whereby we are called, is one of the noblest designs it can possibly enter into the heart of man to conceive.

3. And as this design thus evidently tends, to bring *glory to God in the highest*, so it no less manifestly conduces, to the establishing *peace upon earth*. For as all sin directly tends, both to destroy our peace with God, by setting him at open defiance, to banish peace from our own breasts, and to set every man's sword against his neighbour: so whatever prevents or removes sin, does in the same degree promote peace, both peace in our own soul, peace with God, and peace with one another. Such are the genuine fruits of this design, even in the present world. But why should we confine our views to the narrow bounds of time and space? Rather pass over these into eternity. And what fruit of it shall we find there? Let the apostle speak: *Brethren, if one of you err from the truth, and one convert him* (not to this or that opinion, but to God!) *let him know, that he who converteth a sinner from the*

the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins, Jam. v. 19, 20.

4. Nor is it to individuals only, whether those who betray others into sin, or those that are liable to be betrayed and destroyed by them, that the benefit of this design redounds, but to the whole community whereof we are members. For is it not a sure observation, *righteousness exalteth a nation?* And is it not as sure on the other hand, that *sin is a reproach* to any *people?* Yea, and bringeth down the curse of God upon them? So far therefore as righteousness in any branch is promoted, so far is the national interest advanced. So far as sin, especially open sin is restrained, the curse and reproach are removed from us. Whoever therefore they are that labour herein, they are general benefactors. They are the truest friends of their king and country. And in the same proportion as their design takes place, there can be no doubt, but God will give national prosperity, in accomplishment of his faithful word, *Them that honour me, I will honour.*

5. But it is objected, "However excellent a design this is, it does not concern *you*. For are there not persons, to whom the repressing these offences and punishing the offenders properly belong? Are there not constables and other parish-officers, who are bound by oath to this very thing?" There are constables and church-wardens in particular, who are engaged by solemn oaths, to give due information against profaners of the Lord's

Lord's day, and all other ſcandalous ſinners. But if they leave it undone, if notwithſtanding their oaths, they trouble not themſelves about the matter, it concerns all that fear God, that love mankind, and that wiſh well to their king and country, to purſue this deſign with the very ſame vigour, as if there were no officers exiſting. It being juſt the ſame thing, if they are of no uſe, as if they had no being.

6. " But this is only a pretence: their real deſign, is to get money by giving informations." So it has frequently and roundly been affirmed; but without the leaſt ſhadow of truth. The contrary may be proved by a thouſand inſtances: no member of the ſociety, takes any part of the money which is by the law allotted to the informer. They never did from the beginning: nor does any of them ever receive any thing, to ſuppreſs or withdraw their information. This is another miſtake, if not wilful ſlander, for which there is not the leaſt foundation.

9. " But the deſign is impracticable. Vice is riſen to ſuch an head, that it is impoſſible to ſuppreſs it: eſpecially by ſuch means. For what can an handful of poor people, do in oppoſition to all the world?" *With men this is impoſſible, but not with God.* And they truſt, not in themſelves, but him. Be then the patrons of vice ever ſo ſtrong, to him they are no more than graſshoppers. And all means are alike to him. It is the ſame thing with God *to deliver by*

many

many or by few. The ſmall number therefore of thoſe who are on the Lord's ſide is nothing, neither the great number of thoſe that are againſt him. Still he doth whatever pleaſeth him. And *there is no counſel or ſtrength againſt the Lord.*

8. "But if the end you aim at, be really to reform ſinners, you chuſe the wrong means. It is the word of God muſt effect this, and not human laws. And it is the work of miniſters, not of magiſtrates. Therefore the applying to theſe, can only produce an outward reformation. It makes no change in the heart."

It is true the word of God is the chief, ordinary means, whereby he changes both the hearts and lives of ſinners: and he does this chiefly by the miniſters of the goſpel. But it is likewiſe true, that the magiſtrate is *the miniſter of God:* and that he is deſigned of God *to be a terror to evil doers*, by executing human laws upon them. If this does not change the heart, yet to prevent outward ſin, is one valuable point gain'd. There is ſo much the leſs diſhonour done to God, leſs ſcandal brought on our holy religion, leſs curſe and reproach upon our nation, leſs temptation laid in the way of others. Yea, and leſs wrath heaped up by the ſinners themſelves againſt the day of wrath.

9. "Nay, rather more: for it makes many of them hypocrites, pretending to be what they are not. Others, by expoſing them to ſhame,

and putting them to expence, are made impudent and desperate in wickedness: so that in reality none of them are any better, if they are not worse than they were before."

This is a mistake all over. For 1. Where are these hypocrites? We know none who have pretended to be what they were not. 2. The exposing obstinate offenders to shame, and putting them to expence, does not make them desperate in offending, but afraid to offend. 3. Some of them, far from being worse, are substantially better, the whole tenor of their lives being changed. Yea 4. Some are inwardly changed, even *from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.*

10. "But many are not convinced, that buying or selling on the Lord's day is a sin."

If they are not convinced, they ought to be: it is high time they should. The case is as plain as plain can be. For if an open, wilful breach both of the law of God and the law of the land, is not sin, pray what is? And if such a breach both of divine and human laws is not to be punished, because a man is not convinced it is a sin, there is an end of all execution of justice, and all men may live as they list.

11. "But *mild* methods ought to be tried first." They ought. And so they are. A mild admonition is given to every offender, before the law is put in execution against him: nor is

any

any man profecuted, till he has expreſs notice, that this will be the caſe, unleſs he will prevent that proſecution, by removing the cauſe of it. In every caſe the mildeſt method is uſed, which the nature of the caſe will bear: nor are ſeverer means ever applied, but when they are abſolutely neceſſary to the end.

12. "Well, but after all this ſtir about reformation, what real good has been done?" Unſpeakable good; and abundantly more, than any one could have expected, in ſo ſhort a time, conſidering the ſmall number of the inſtruments, and the difficulties they had to encounter. Much evil has been already prevented, and much has been removed. Many ſinners have been outwardly reformed; ſome have been inwardly changed. The honour of him whoſe name we bear, ſo openly affronted, has been openly defended. And it is not eaſy to determine, how many and how great bleſſings, even this little ſtand, made for God and his cauſe, againſt his daring enemies, may already have derived upon our whole nation. On the whole then, after all the objections that can be made, reaſonable men may ſtill conclude, a more excellent deſign could ſcarce ever enter into the heart of man.

III. 1. But *what manner of men* ought they to be, who engage in ſuch a deſign? Some may imagine, any that are willing to aſſiſt therein,

ought readily to be admitted; and that the greater the number of members, the greater will be their influence. But this is by no means true: matter of fact undeniably proves the contrary. While the former society for reformation of manners, consisted of chosen members only, tho' neither many, rich, nor powerful, they broke thro' all opposition, and were eminently successful in every branch of their undertaking. But when a number of men, less carefully chosen, were received into that society, they grew less and less useful, till by insensible degrees, they dwindled into nothing.

2. The *number* therefore of the members is no more to be attended to, than the riches or eminence. This is a work of God. It is undertaken in the name of God, and for his sake. It follows, that men who neither love nor fear God, have no part or lot in this matter, *Why takest thou my covenant in thy mouth*, may God say to any of these, *whereas thou* thyself *hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my words behind thee?* Whoever therefore lives in any known sin, is not fit to engage in reforming sinners. More especially if he is guilty in any instance, or in the least degree, of profaning the name of God, or buying, selling or doing any unnecessary work on the Lord's day, or offending in any other of those instances, which this society is peculiarly designed to reform. No: let none

who

who ſtands himſelf in need of this reformation, preſume to meddle with ſuch an undertaking. Firſt, let him *pull the beam out of his own eye.* Let him be himſelf *unblamable* in all things.

3. Not that this will ſuffice. Every one engaging herein, ſhould be more than a harmleſs man. He ſhould be a man of *faith:* having at leaſt ſuch a degree of that *evidence of things not ſeen,* as to *aim not at the things that are ſeen, which are temporal, but at thoſe that are not ſeen, which are eternal:* ſuch a faith, as produces a ſteady *fear of God,* with a laſting reſolution, by his grace to abſtain from all that he has forbidden, and to do all that he has commanded. He will more eſpecially need, that particular branch of faith, *confidence in God.* It is this faith which *removes mountains,* which *quenches the violence of fire,* which breaks thro' all oppoſition, and enables one to ſtand againſt and *chaſe a thouſand,* knowing in whom his ſtrength lies, and even when he has *the ſentence of death in himſelf, truſting in him who raiſeth the dead.*

4. He that has faith and confidence in God, will of conſequence be a man of *courage.* And ſuch it is highly needful every man ſhould be, who engages in this undertaking. For many things will occur in the proſecution thereof, which are terrible to nature: indeed ſo terrible, that all who *confer with fleſh and blood* will be afraid to incounter them. Here therefore true

courage has its proper place, and is neceſſary in the higheſt degree. And this, faith only can ſupply. A believer can ſay,

I fear no denial;
No danger I fear:
Nor ſtart from the trial;
For Jeſus is near.

5. To *courage*, *patience* is nearly allied: the one regarding future, the other preſent evils. And whoever joins in carrying on a deſign of this nature, will have great occaſion for this. For notwithſtanding all his unblamableneſs, he will find himſelf juſt in *Iſhmael*'s ſituation, *his hand againſt every man, and every man's hand againſt him.* And no wonder. If it be true, that *all who will live godly, ſhall ſuffer perſecution*, how eminently muſt this be fulfilled in them, who not content to live godly themſelves, compel the ungodly to do ſo too, or at leaſt to refrain from notorious ungodlineſs? Is not this, declaring war againſt all the world? Setting all the children of the devil at defiance? And will not Satan himſelf, *the prince of this world, the ruler of the darkneſs* thereof, exert all his ſubtlety and all his force, in ſupport of his tottering kingdom? Who can expect, the *roaring lion* will tamely ſubmit to have the prey plucked out of his teeth? *Ye have* therefore *need of patience*,

hence, that *when ye have done the will of God ye may receive the promise.*

6. And ye have need of *ſteddineſs*, that ye may *hold faſt* this *profeſſion of your faith without wavering.* This alſo ſhould be found in all that unite in this ſociety; which is not a taſk for a *double-minded man*, for one that is *unſtable in his ways.* He that is as a reed ſhaken with the wind, is not fit for this warfare, which demands a firm purpoſe of ſoul, a conſtant, determined reſolution. One that is wanting in this, may *ſet his hand to the plow:* but how ſoon will he *look back?* He may indeed *endure for a time. But when perſecution or tribulation*, public or private troubles, *ariſe becauſe of the* work, *immediately he is offended.*

7. Indeed it is hard for any to perſevere in ſo unpleaſing a work, unleſs *love* overpowers both pain and fear. And therefore it is highly expedient that all engaged therein, have *the love of God ſhed abroad in their hearts:* that they ſhould all be able to declare, *we love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.* The preſence of him whom their ſoul loveth, will then make their labour light. They can then ſay, not from the wildneſs of an heated imagination, but with the utmoſt truth and ſoberneſs,

With thee converſing, I forget
All time, and toil, and care:

Labour is reſt, and pain it ſweet,
While thou, my God, art here.

8. What adds a ſtill greater ſweetneſs even to labour and pain, is the Chriſtian *love of our neighbour*. When they *love their neighbour*, that is, every ſoul of man, *as themſelves*, as their own ſouls; when *the love of Chriſt conſtrains* them to love one another, *even as he loved us*; when, as he *taſted death for every man*, ſo they are *ready to lay down their life for their brethren*, (including in that number, *every man*, every ſoul for which Chriſt died:) what proſpect of danger will then be able to fright them from their labour of love? What ſuffering will they not be ready to undergo, to ſave one ſoul from everlaſting burnings? What continuance of labour, diſappointment, pain, will vanquiſh their fixt reſolution! Will they not be

"Gainſt all repulſes ſteeled, nor ever tired,
With toilſom day, or ill-ſucceeding night?"

So love both *hopeth and endureth all things*. So *charity never faileth*.

9. Love is neceſſary for all the members of ſuch a ſociety, on another account likewiſe; even becauſe it *is not puffed up*; it produces not only courage and patience, but *humility*. And O! how needful is this for all who are ſo employed!

ployed! What can be of more importance, than that they ſhould be little, and mean, and baſe, and vile in their own eyes? For otherwiſe, ſhould they think themſelves any thing, ſhould they impute any thing to themſelves, ſhould they admit any thing of a *phariſaic* ſpirit, *truſting in themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſing others:* nothing could more directly tend to overthrow the whole deſign. For then they would not only have all the world, but alſo God himſelf to contend with; ſeeing he *reſiſteth the proud, and giveth grace* only *to the humble.* Deeply conſcious therefore ſhould every member of this ſociety be, of his own fooliſhneſs, weakneſs, helpleſſneſs: continually hanging with his whole ſoul upon him, who alone hath wiſdom and ſtrength, with an unſpeakable conviction, that *the help which is done upon earth, God doth it himſelf*; and that it is he *alone who worketh in us, both to will and to do, of his good pleaſure.*

10. One point more, whoever engages in this deſign ſhould have deeply impreſt on his heart, namely, that *the wrath of man worketh not the righteouſneſs of God.* Let him therefore *learn of* him *who was meek* as well as lowly. And let him abide in meekneſs as well as humility: *With all lowlineſs and meekneſs,* let him *walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called.* Let him be *gentle toward all men,* good or bad; for his own ſake, for their ſake, for Chriſt's

ſake. Are any *ignorant and out of the way?* Let him *have compaſſion* upon them. Do they even *oppoſe* the word and the work of God, yea ſet themſelves in battle array againſt it? So much the more hath he need, *in meekneſs to inſtruct thoſe who* thus *oppoſe themſelves*, if haply they may *awake out of the ſnare of the devil*, and no more be *taken captive at his will.*

IV. 1. From the *qualifications* of thoſe who are proper to engage in ſuch an undertaking as this, I proceed to ſhew, fourthly, With what *ſpirit*, and in what *manner*, it ought to be purſued. Firſt, with what ſpirit. Now this firſt regards the *motive* which is to be preſerved, in every ſtep that is taken. For *if* at any time *the light which is in thee be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs?* But *if thine eye be ſingle, thy whole body ſhall be full of light.* This is therefore continually to be remembred, and carried into every word and action. Nothing is to be ſpoke or done, either great or ſmall, with a view to any temporal advantage: nothing with a view to the favour or eſteem, the love or the praiſe of men. But the intention, the eye of the mind is always to be fixt on the glory of God and good of man.

2. But the Spirit with which every thing is to be done, regards the *temper*, as well as the motive. And this is no other than that, which has been

been described above. For the same courage, patience, steddiness, which qualify a man for the work, are to be exercised therein. *Above all*, let him *take the shield of faith*: this will quench a thousand fiery darts. Let him exert all the faith which God has given him, in every trying hour. And let *all* his *doings be done in love*: never let this be wrested from him. Neither must *many* waters quench this love, nor the floods of ingratitude drown it. *Let* likewise that lowly *mind* be in him, which was also in Christ Jesus. Yea, and let him *be cloathed with humility*, filling his heart, and adorning his whole behaviour. At the same time, let him *put on bowels of mercies, gentleness, long-suffering*: avoiding the least appearance of malice, bitterness, anger or resentment; knowing, it is our calling, not to be *overcome of evil*; *but* to *overcome evil with good*. In order to preserve this humble, gentle love, it is needful to do all things with *recollection* of spirit, *watching* against all *hurry*, or dissipation of thought, as well as against pride, wrath, or furliness. But this can be no otherwise preserved, than by *continuing instant in prayer*, both before and after he comes into the field, and during the whole action; and by doing all in the *spirit of sacrifice*, offering all to God, thro' the Son of his love.

3. As to the outward *manner* of acting, a general rule is, let it be expressive of these inward tempers. But to be more particular. 1. Let

every man beware, not to *do evil that good may come.* Therefore *putting away all lying*, let every man *ſpeak the truth to his neighbour.* Uſe no *fraud* or *guile*, either in order to detect or to puniſh any man, but *by ſimplicity or godly ſincerity commend* yourſelf to mens *conſciences in the ſight of* God. It is probable, that by your adhering to theſe rules, fewer offenders will be convicted. But ſo much the more will the bleſſing of God accompany the whole undertaking.

4. But let innocence be joined with *prudence*, properly ſo called. Not that offſpring of hell, which *the world calls* prudence, which is mere craft, cunning, diſſimulation: but with that *wiſdom from above*, which our Lord peculiarly recommends, to all who would promote his kingdom upon earth. *Be ye* therefore *wiſe as ſerpents*, while ye are *harmleſs as doves.* This wiſdom will inſtruct you, how to ſuit your words and whole behaviour, to the perſons with whom you have to do, to the time, place, and all other circumſtances. It will teach you to cut off occaſion of offence, even from thoſe who ſeek occaſion, and to do things of the moſt offenſive nature, in the leaſt offenſive manner that is poſſible.

5. Your *manner of ſpeaking*, particularly to offenders, ſhould be at all times deeply *ſerious*, (leſt it appear like inſulting or triumphing over them) rather inclining to *ſad:* ſhewing that you

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pity them, for what they do, and ſympathize with them in what they ſuffer. Let your *air* and *tone* of voice, as well as words, be *diſpaſſionate*, *calm*, *mild:* yea, where it would not appear like diſſimulation, even *kind* and *friendly*. In ſome caſes, where it will probably be received as it is meant, you may *profeſs* the *good-will* you bear them: but at the ſame time, (that it may not be thought to proceed from fear, or any wrong inclination) profeſſing your *intrepidity* and inflexible *reſolution*, to oppoſe and puniſh vice to the uttermoſt.

V. 1. It remains only to make ſome application of what has been ſaid, partly to you who are already engaged in this work, partly to all that fear God, and more eſpecially to them that love as well as fear him.

With regard to you, who are already engaged in this work, the firſt advice I would give you is, calmly and deeply to conſider, the nature of your undertaking. Know what you are about; be throughly acquainted with what you have in hand. Conſider the objections which are made to the whole of your undertaking. And before you proceed, be ſatisfied that thoſe objections have no real weight. Then may every man act, as he is fully perſuaded in his own mind.

2. I adviſe you, ſecondly, be not in haſte, to increaſe your number. And in adding thereto, regard

regard not wealth, rank, or any outward circumſtance. Only regard the qualifications above deſcribed. Enquire diligently, Whether the perſon propoſed be of an *unblamable* carriage, and whether he be a man of *faith, courage, patience, ſteddineſs?* Whether he be a *lover* of God and man? If ſo, he will add to your ſtrength as well as number. If not, you will loſe by him more than you gain. For you will diſpleaſe God. And be not afraid to purge out from among you, any who do not anſwer the preceding character. By thus leſſening your number, you will increaſe your ſtrength: you will be *veſſels meet for your maſter's uſe.*

3. I would, thirdly, adviſe you, narrowly to obſerve from what *motive*, you at any time act or ſpeak. Beware that your intention be not ſtained, with any regard either to profit or praiſe. Whatever you do, *do it to the Lord*, as the ſervants of Chriſt. Do not aim at pleaſing yourſelf in any point, but pleaſing him whoſe you are, and whom you ſerve. Let your eye be ſingle, from firſt to laſt: eye God alone in every word and work.

4. I adviſe you, in the fourth place, ſee that you do every thing in a right *temper:* with lowlineſs, and meekneſs, with patience and gentleneſs, worthy the goſpel of Chriſt. Take every ſtep truſting in God, and in the moſt tender, loving ſpirit you are able. Mean time *watch always*, againſt all hurry and diſſipation of ſpirit, and *pray always* with all earneſtneſs and perſeverance

verance, that your faith fail not. And let nothing interrupt that *ſpirit of ſacrifice*, which you make of all you have and are, of all you ſuffer and do, that it may be an offering of a ſweet ſmelling ſavour to God through Jeſus Chriſt.

5. As to the *manner* of acting and ſpeaking, I adviſe you to do it with all innocence and ſimplicity, prudence and ſerioufneſs. Add to theſe all poſſible calmneſs and mildneſs; nay, all the tenderneſs which the caſe will bear. You are not to behave as butchers or hangmen, but as ſurgeons rather; who put the patient to no more pain than is neceſſary, in order to the cure. For this purpoſe, each of *you* likewiſe has need of "a lady's hand with a lion's heart." So ſhall many even of them you are conſtrained to puniſh, *glorify* God *in the day of viſitation*.

6. I exhort all of you who fear God, as ever you hope to find mercy at his hands, as you dread being found (tho' you knew it not) *even to fight againſt* God: do not on any account, reaſon, or pretence whatſoever, either directly or indirectly, oppoſe or hinder ſo merciful a deſign, and one ſo conducive to his glory. But this is not all: if you are lovers of mankind, if you long to leſſen the ſins and miſeries of your fellow-creatures: can you ſatisfy yourſelves, can you be clear before God, by barely not oppoſing it? Are not *you* alſo bound by the moſt ſacred ties, *as you have opportunity to do good to all men?*

And

And is not here an opportunity of doing good to many, even good of the higheſt kind? In the name of God then, embrace the opportunity. Aſſiſt in doing this good, if no otherwiſe, yet by your earneſt prayers, for them who are immediately employed therein. Aſſiſt them, according to your ability, to defray the expence which neceſſarily attends it, and which without the aſſiſtance of charitable perſons, would be a burden they could not bear. Aſſiſt them, if you can without inconvenience, by quarterly or yearly ſubſcriptions. At leaſt, aſſiſt them *now:* uſe the preſent hour, doing what God puts into your heart. Let it not be ſaid, that you ſaw your brethren labouring for God, and would not help them with one of your fingers. In this way, however, *come to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord, againſt the mighty!*

7. I have an higher demand upon *you* who love, as well as fear God. He whom you fear, whom you love, has qualified *you*, for promoting his work in a more excellent way. Becauſe you love God, you love your brother alſo: you love not only your friends, but your enemies; not only the friends, but even the enemies of God. You have *put on, as the elect of* God, *lowlineſs, gentleneſs, long-ſuffering.* You have faith in God, and in Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent: faith which overcometh the world. And hereby you conquer both evil ſhame, and that fear of man which *bringeth a ſnare:* ſo that you can

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ſtand with boldneſs before them that deſpiſe you and make no account of your labours. Qualified then as you are, and armed for the fight, will *you* be *like the children of Ephraim, who being harneſſed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle?* Will *you* leave a few of your brethren to ſtand alone, againſt all the hoſts of the aliens? O ſay not, "This is too heavy a croſs: I have not ſtrength or courage to bear it." True; not of yourſelf. But you that believe, *can do all things through Chriſt ſtrengthening* you. *If thou canſt believe, all things are poſſible to him that believeth.* No croſs is too heavy for *him* to bear, knowing that they that *ſuffer with him, ſhall reign with him.* Say not, "Nay, but I cannot bear to be *ſingular.*" Then you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. No one enters there but thro' the *narrow way.* And all that walk in this, are ſingular. Say not, "But I cannot endure the reproach, the odious name of an *informer.*" And did any man ever ſave his ſoul, that was not *a by-word, and a proverb of reproach?* Neither canſt thou ever ſave thine, unleſs thou art willing, that men ſhould *ſay all manner of evil of thee.* Say not, "But if I am active in this work, I ſhall loſe not only my reputation, but my friends, my cuſtomers, my buſineſs, my livelihood, ſo that I ſhall be brought to poverty." Thou ſhalt not: thou canſt not: it is abſolutely impoſſible, unleſs God himſelf chuſeth it. For his *kingdom ruleth over all,* and

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the very hairs of thy head are all numbered. But if the wife, the gracious God chuſe it for thee, wilt thou murmur or complain? Wilt thou not rather ſay, *The cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it?* If you *ſuffer for Chriſt, happy are you: the Spirit of glory and of Chriſt ſhall reſt upon you.* Say not, "I would ſuffer all things, but my wife will not conſent to it. And certainly a man ought to *leave father and mother* and all, *and cleave to his wife.*" True; all—but God; all—but Chriſt. But he ought not to leave *him* for his wife. He is not to *leave any duty undone*, for the deareſt relative. Our Lord himſelf hath ſaid in this very ſenſe, *If any man loveth father, or mother, or wife, or children, more than me, he is not worthy of me!* Say not, "Well, I would forſake all for Chriſt. But one duty muſt not hinder another. And this would frequently hinder my attending public worſhip." Sometimes it probably would. *Go* then *and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not ſacrifice.* And whatever is loſt, by ſhewing this mercy, God will repay ſevenfold into thy boſom. Say not, "But I ſhall hurt my own ſoul. I am a young man: and by taking up looſe women, I ſhould expoſe myſelf to temptation." Yes, if you did this in your own ſtrength, or for your own pleaſure. But that is not the caſe. You truſt in God: and you aim at pleaſing him only. And if he ſhould call you even into the midſt of a burning fiery furnace, *though thou walkeſt thro'*

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the fire thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the flames kindle upon thee. "True; if *he called me* into the furnace. But I do not ſee that I am called to this." Perhaps thou art not willing to ſee it. However, if thou waſt not called before, I call thee *now*, in the name of Chriſt: take up thy croſs and follow him. Reaſon no more with fleſh and blood, but now reſolve to caſt in thy lot, with the moſt deſpiſed, the moſt infamous of his followers, the filth and off-ſcouring of the world. I call thee in particular, who didſt once ſtrengthen their hands, but ſince art drawn back. Take courage! Be ſtrong! Fulfil their joy, by returning with heart and hand. Let it appear, thou *departedſt for a ſeaſon, that they might receive thee again for ever.* O be *not diſobedient to the heavenly calling!* And as for all of you, who know whereunto ye are called, count ye all things loſs, ſo ye may ſave one ſoul, for which Chriſt died. And therein *take no thought for the morrow*, but *caſt all your care on him that careth for you. Commit* your ſouls, bodies, ſubſtance, all, to him, *as unto a merciful and faithful Creator.*

N. B. After this Society had ſubſcribed ſeveral years, and done unſpeakable good, it was wholly deſtroyed, by a verdict given againſt it in the King's Bench, with three hundred pounds damages. I doubt a ſevere account remains for the witneſſes, the jury, and all who were concerned in that dreadful affair.

SERMON

SERMON LIII. †

NUMB. xxiii. 10.

Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my laſt end be like his!

1. *LET my laſt end be like his!* How many of you join in this wiſh? Perhaps there are few of you who do not, even in this numerous congregation. And O that this wiſh may reſt upon your minds! That it may not die away, till your ſouls alſo are lodged *where the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and where the weary are at reſt!*

2. An elaborate expoſition of the text, will not be expected on this occaſion. It would detain you too long from the ſadly-pleaſing thought of your beloved brother, friend, and paſtor; yea, and father too: for how many are here whom he hath *begotten in the Lord?* Will it not then be more ſuitable to your inclinations, as well as to this ſolemnity, directly to ſpeak of this

† On the death of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield. Preached at the Chappel in Tottenham-Court-Road, and at the Tabernacle near Moorfields, on Sunday, November 18, 1770.

this man of God, whom you have ſo often heard ſpeaking in this place? *The end of whoſe converſation* ye know, *Jeſus Chriſt, the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever.*

And may we not,

Firſt, Obſerve a few particulars of his life and death.

Secondly, Take ſome view of his character. And,

Thirdly, Inquire how we may improve this awful providence, his ſudden removal from us.

I. 1. We may, in the firſt place, obſerve a few particulars of his life and death. He was born at *Gloceſter*, in *December*, 1714, and put to a Grammar-ſchool there, when about twelve years old. When he was ſeventeen he began to be ſeriouſly religious, and ſerved God to the beſt of his knowledge. About eighteen he removed to the univerſity, and was admitted at *Pembroke*-College in *Oxford*. And about a year after, he became acquainted with the *Methodiſts*, (ſo called) whom from that time he loved as his own ſoul.

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2. By them he was convinced, that we *muſt be born again*, or outward religion will profit us nothing. He joined with them in faſting on *Wedneſdays* and *Fridays*, in viſiting the ſick and the priſoners, and in gathering up the very fragments of time, that no moment might be loſt. And he changed the courſe of his ſtudies, reading chiefly ſuch books as entered into the heart of religion, and led directly to an experimental knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.

3. He was ſoon tried as with fire. Not only his reputation was loſt, and ſome of his deareſt friends forſook him; but he was exerciſed with inward trials, and thoſe of the ſevereſt kind. Many nights he lay ſleepleſs upon his bed; many days proſtrate on the ground. But after he had groaned ſeveral months under *the Spirit of bondage*, God was pleaſed to remove the heavy load, by giving him *the Spirit of adoption*, enabling him, through a living faith, to lay hold on *the Son of his love*.

4. However, it was thought needful, for the recovery of his health, which was much impaired, that he ſhould go into the country. He accordingly went to *Gloceſter*, where God enabled him to awaken ſeveral young perſons. Theſe ſoon formed themſelves into a little ſociety, and were ſome of the firſt fruits of his labour. Shortly after he began to read twice or thrice

thrice a week to some poor people in the town, and every day to read to, and pray with the prisoners in the county goal.

5. Being now about twenty-one years of age, he was solicited to enter into holy orders. Of this he was greatly afraid, being deeply sensible of his own insufficiency. But the bishop himself sending for him, and telling him, "Tho' "I had purposed to ordain none under three "and twenty, yet I will ordain *you* whenever "you come;" and several other providential circumstances concurring, he submitted, and was ordained on *Trinity-Sunday*, 1736. The next *Sunday* he preached to a crouded auditory, in the church wherein he was baptized. The week following he returned to *Oxford*, and took his Batchelor's degree. And he was now fully employed, the care of the prisoners and the poor lying chiefly on him.

6. But it was not long before he was invited to *London*, to serve the cure of a friend going into the country. He continued there two months, lodging in the *Tower*, reading prayers in the chappel twice a week, catechizing and preaching once, beside daily visiting the soldiers in the barracks and the infirmary. He also read prayers every evening at *Wapping*-chappel, and preached at *Ludgate*-prison every *Tuesday*. While he was here, letters came from his friends in *Georgia*, which made him long

long to go and help them. But not feeing his call clear, at the appointed time he returned to his little charge at *Oxford*; where feveral youths met daily at his room, to *build up each other in their moſt holy faith*.

7. But he was quickly called from hence again to fupply the cure of *Dummer* in *Hampſhire*. Here he read prayers twice a day, early in the morning, and in the evening, after the people came from work. He alſo daily catechized the children, and viſited from houſe to houſe. He now divided the day into three parts, alloting eight hours for ſleep and meals, eight for ſtudy and retirement, and eight for reading prayers, catechizing, and viſiting the people.— Is there a more excellent way for a ſervant of Chriſt and his church? If not, Who will *go and do likewiſe?*

8. Yet his mind ſtill ran on going abroad. And being now fully convinced he was called of God thereto, he ſet all things in order, and in *January* 1737, went down to take leave of his friends in *Gloceſter*. It was in this journey that God began to bleſs his miniſtry in an uncommon manner. Wherever he preached, amazing multitudes of hearers flocked together, in *Gloceſter*, in *Stonehouſe*, in *Bath*, in *Briſtol*: ſo that the heat of the churches was ſcarce ſupportable. And the impreſſions made on the minds of many, were no leſs extraordinary.

nary. After his return to *London*, while he was detained by General *Oglethorpe*, from week to week, and from month to month, it pleaſed God to bleſs his word ſtill more. And he was indefatigable in his labour: generally on *Sunday* he preached four times, to exceeding large auditories; beſide reading prayers twice or thrice, and walking to and fro, often ten or twelve miles.

9. On *December* 28, he left *London*. It was on the 29th that he firſt preached without notes. *December* 30, he went on board; but it was above a month before they cleared the land. One happy effect of their very ſlow paſſage, he mentions in *April* following: "Bleſſed be God, "we now live very comfortably in the great "cabbin. We talk of little elſe but God and "Chriſt: and ſcarce a word is heard among us "when together, but what has reference to our "fall in the firſt, and our new birth in the ſe-"cond *Adam*." It ſeems likewiſe to have been a peculiar providence, that he ſhould ſpend a little time at *Gibraltar*; where both citizens and ſoldiers, high and low, young and old, acknowledged the day of their viſitation.

10. From *Sunday*, *May* 7, 1738, till the latter end of *Auguſt* following, he *made full proof of his miniſtry* in *Georgia*, particularly at *Savannah*: he read prayers and expounded twice a day and viſited the ſick daily. On *Sunday* he ex-

pounded at five in the morning; at ten read prayers and preached, and at three in the afternoon: and at seven in the evening expounded the church-catechism. How much easier is it for our brethren in the ministry, either in *England*, *Scotland*, or *Ireland*, to find fault with such a labourer in our Lord's vineyard, than to tread in his steps?

11. It was now that he observed the deplorable condition of many children here; and that God put into his heart the first thought of founding an *Orphan-house:* for which he determined to raise contributions in *England*, if God should give him a safe return thither. In *December* following he did return to *London:* and on *Sunday*, *January* the 14th, 1739, he was ordained priest at *Christ-Church*, *Oxford*. The next day he came to *London* again: and on *Sunday* the 21st preached twice. But though the churches were large, and crouded exceedingly, yet many hundreds stood in the churchyard, and hundreds more returned home. This put him upon the first thought of preaching in the open air. But when he mentioned it to some of his friends, they judged it to be mere madness. So he did not carry it into execution, till after he had left *London*. It was on *Wednesday*, *February* 21, that finding all the church-doors to be shut in *Bristol*, (beside that no church was able to contain one half of the congregation)

tion) at three in the afternoon he went to *Kingſwood*, and preached abroad, to near two thouſand people. On *Friday* he preached there to four or five thouſand; and on *Sunday* to (it was ſuppoſed) ten thouſand. The number continually increaſed all the time he ſtayed at *Briſtol*. And a flame of holy love was kindled, which will not eaſily be put out. The ſame was afterwards kindled in various parts of *Wales*, of *Gloceſterſhire*, and *Worceſterſhire*. Indeed whereever he went, God abundantly confirmed the word of his meſſenger.

12. On *Sunday*, *April* 29, he preached the firſt time in *Moorfields*, and on *Kennington*-common. And the thouſands of hearers were as quiet as they could have been in a church. Being again detained in *England* from month to month, he made little excurſions into ſeveral counties, and received the contributions of willing multitudes, for an Orphan-houſe in *Georgia*. The embargo which was now laid on the ſhipping, gave him leiſure for more journies, through various parts of *England*, for which many will have reaſon to bleſs God to all eternity. At length, on *Auguſt* 14, he embarked. But he did not land in *Penſylvania* till *October* 30. Afterwards he went through *Penſylvania*, the *Jerſeys*, *New-York*, *Maryland*, *Virginia*, *North* and *South Carolina*, preaching all along to immenſe congregations, with full as great effect as in *Eng-*

land; on *January* 10, 1740, he arrived at *Savannah*.

13. *January* 29, he added three defolate orphans to near twenty which he had in his houfe before. The next day he laid out the ground for the houfe, about ten miles from *Savannah*. *February* 11, he took in four orphans more, and fet out for *Frederica*, in order to fetch orphans that were in the fouthern parts of the colony. In his return he fixt a fchool, both for children and grown perfons, at *Darien*, and took four orphans thence. *March* 25, he laid the firft ftone of the Orphan-houfe, to which, with great propriety, he gave the name of *Bethefda*: a work for which the children yet unborn fhall praife the Lord. He had now about forty orphans, fo that there were near an hundred mouths to be fed daily. But he was *careful for nothing*, caffing his care on him who *feedeth the young ravens that call upon him*.

14. In *April* he made another tour through *Penfylvania*, the *Jerfeys*, and *New-York*. Incredible multitudes flocked to hear, among whom were abundance of negroes. In all places the greater part of the hearers were affected to an amazing degree. Many were deeply convinced of their loft ftate; many truly converted to God. In fome places thoufands cried out aloud; many as in the agonies of death. Moft were drowned in tears; fome turned pale as death; others were

wringing

wringing their hands; others lying on the ground; others ſinking into the arms of their friends; almoſt all lifting up their eyes, and calling for mercy.

15. He returned to *Savannah*, *June* 5. The next evening, during the public ſervice, the whole congregation, young and old, were diſſolved in tears. After ſervice, ſeveral of the pariſhioners, and all his family, particularly the little children, returned home crying along the ſtreet, and ſome could not help praying aloud. The groans and cries of the children continued all night, and great part of the next day.

16. In *Auguſt* he ſet out again, and through various provinces came to *Boſton*. While he was here, and in the neighbouring places, he was extremely weak in body. Yet the multitudes of hearers were ſo great, and the effects wrought on them ſo aſtoniſhing, as the oldeſt men then alive in the town had never ſeen before. The ſame power attended his preaching at *New-York*; particularly on *Sunday*, *November* 2. Almoſt as ſoon as he began, crying, weeping, and wailing, were to be heard on every ſide. Many ſunk down to the ground, cut to the heart: and many were filled with divine conſolation. Toward the cloſe of his journey he made this reflection: "It is the ſeventy-fifth day ſince I "arrived at *Rhode-Iſland*, exceeding weak in "body. Yet God has enabled me to preach an

" hundred and seventy-five times in public, be-
" side exhorting frequently in private. Never
" did God vouchsafe me greater comforts: ne-
" ver did I perform my journies with less fatigue,
" or see such a continuance of the divine pre-
" sence in the congregations to whom I preach-
" ed." In *December* he returned to *Savannah*, and in the *March* following arrived in *England*.

17. You may easily observe, that the preceding account is chiefly extracted from his own journals, which, for their artless and unaffected simplicity, may vie with any writings of the kind. And how exact a specimen is this of his labours both in *Europe* and *America*, for the honour of his beloved Master, during the thirty years that followed! As well as of the uninterrupted shower of blessings wherewith God was pleased to succeed his labours! Is it not much to be lamented, that any thing should have prevented his continuing this account, till at least near the time when he was called by his Lord to enjoy the fruit of his labour?—If he has left any papers of this kind, and his friends account me worthy of the honour, it would be my glory and joy to methodize, transcribe, and prepare them for the public view.

18. A particular account of the last scene of his life, is thus given by a gentleman of *Boston*: " After being about a month with us in *Boston*
" and its vicinity, and preaching every day,
" he

" he went to *Old-york*, preached on *Thurſday*,
" *September* 27, there; proceeded to *Portſ-*
" *mouth*, and preached there on *Friday*. On
" *Saturday* morning he ſet out for *Boſton*; but
" before he came to *Newbury*, where he had en-
" gaged to preach the next morning, he was
" importuned to preach by the way. The
" houſe not being large enough to contain the
" people, he preached in an open field. But
" having been infirm for ſeveral weeks, this ſo
" exhauſted his ſtrength, that when he came to
" *Newbury*, he could not get out of the ferry-
" boat without the help of two men. In the
" evening, however, he recovered his ſpirits,
" and appeared with his uſual chearfulneſs. He
" went to his chamber at nine, his fixt time,
" which no company could divert him from:
" and ſlept better than he had done for ſome
" weeks before. He roſe at four in the
" morning, *September* 30, and went into his
" cloſet; and his companion obſerved he was
" unuſually long in private. He left his cloſet,
" returned to his companion, threw himſelf on
" the bed, and lay about ten minutes. Then
" he fell upon his knees, and prayed moſt fer-
" vently to God, " That if it was conſiſtent with
" his will he might that day finiſh his Maſter's
" work." He then deſired his man to call Mr.
" Parſons, the clergyman, at whoſe houſe he
" was: but in a minute, before Mr. Parſons

" could reach him died, without a ſigh or groan. " On the news of his death, ſix gentlemen ſet " out for *Newbury*, in order to bring his remains " hither, but he could not be moved, ſo that " his precious aſhes muſt remain at *Newbury*. " Hundreds would have gone from this town to " attend his funeral, had they not expected he " would have been interred here.—May this " ſtroke be ſanctified to the church of God in " general, and to this province in particular !"

II. 1. We are in the ſecond place, to take ſome view of his character. A little ſketch of this, was ſoon after publiſhed in the *Boſton Gazette:* an extract of which is ſubjoined: " In " his public labours he has for many years aſto- " niſhed the world with his eloquence and devo- " tion. With what divine pathos did he per- " ſuade the impenitent ſinner to embrace the " practice of piety and virtue! He ſpoke from " the heart, and with a fervency of zeal, per- " haps unequalled ſince the days of the apoſtles. " From the pulpit he was unrivalled in the com- " mand of an ever-crowded auditory. Nor was " he leſs agreeable and inſtructive in his private " converſation: happy in a remarkable eaſe of " addreſs, willing to communicate, ſtudious to " edify. May the riſing generation catch a " ſpark of that flame which ſhone with ſuch di-

" ſtinguiſhed

" ſtinguiſhed luſtre in the ſpirit and practice
" of this faithful ſervant of the moſt high God!"

2. A more particular, and equally juſt character of him, has appeared in one of the *Engliſh* papers. It may not be diſagreeable to you, to add the ſubſtance of this likewiſe: " The cha-
" racter of this truly pious perſon, muſt be
" impreſt on the heart of every friend to vital
" religion. In ſpite of a tender conſtitution, he
" continued, to the laſt day of his life, preach-
" ing with a frequency and a fervor, that ſeemed
" to exceed the natural ſtrength of the moſt ro-
" buſt. Being called to the exerciſe of his func-
" tion at an age, when moſt young men are
" only beginning to qualify themſelves for it,
" he had not time to make a very conſidera-
" ble progreſs in the learned languages. But
" this defect was amply ſupplied, by a lively
" and fertile genius, by fervent zeal, and by
" a forcible and moſt perſuaſive delivery. And
" though in the pulpit he often found it need-
" ful, by *the terrors of the Lord to perſuade men*,
" he had nothing gloomy in his nature, being
" ſingularly chearful, as well as charitable and
" tender-hearted. He was as ready to relieve
" the bodily as the ſpiritual neceſſities of thoſe
" that applied to him. It ought alſo to be ob-
" ſerved, that he conſtantly enforced upon his
" audience every moral duty, particularly in-
" duſtry in their ſeveral callings, and obedience

" to their ſuperiors. He endeavoured, by the " moſt extraordinary efforts, of preaching in " different places, and even in the open fields, " to rouſe the lower claſs of people, from the " laſt degree of inattention and ignorance, to a " ſenſe of religion. For this, and his other la- " bours, the name of George Whitefield, will " long be remembred with eſteem and venera- " tion."

3. That both theſe accounts are juſt and impartial, will readily be allowed; that is, as far as they go. But they go little farther than the *outſide* of his character. They ſhew you the *preacher*, but not the *man*, the *Chriſtian*, the *ſaint* of God. May I be permitted to add a little on this head, from a perſonal knowledge of near forty years? Indeed, I am thoroughly ſenſible how difficult it is to ſpeak on ſo delicate a ſubject; what prudence is required to avoid both extremes, to ſay neither too little, nor too much? Nay, I know it is impoſſible to ſpeak to all, to ſay either leſs or more, without incurring from ſome the former, from others the latter cenſure. Some will ſeriouſly think, that too little is ſaid; and others, that it is too much. But without attending to this, I will ſpeak juſt what I know, before him to whom we are all to give an account.

4. Mention has already been made of his unparalleled *zeal*, his indefatigable *activity*, his

tender-

tender-heartedneſs to the afflicted, and *charitableneſs* toward the poor. But ſhould we not likewiſe mention his deep *gratitude*, to all whom God had uſed as inſtruments of good to him? Of whom he did not ceaſe to ſpeak in the moſt reſpectful manner, even to his dying day. Should we not mention, that he had an heart ſuſceptible of the moſt generous and the moſt tender *friendſhip?* I have frequently thought, that this, of all others, was the diſtinguiſhing part of his character. How few have we known of ſo kind a temper, of ſuch large and flowing affections? Was it not principally by this, that the hearts of others were ſo ſtrangely drawn and knit to him? Can any thing but love beget love? This ſhone in his very countenance, and continually breathed in all his words, whether in public or private. Was it not this, which, quick and penetrating as lightning, flew from heart to heart? Which gave that life to his ſermons, his converſations, his letters? Ye are witneſſes.

5. But away with the vile miſconſtruction of men of corrupt minds, who know of no love but what is *earthly and ſenſual.* Be it remembered, at the ſame time, that he was endued with the moſt nice and unblemiſhed *modeſty.* His office called him to converſe very frequently and largely, with women as well as men; and thoſe of every age and condition. But his whole behaviour toward them, was a practical

comment on that advice of St. *Paul* to *Timothy*, *Intreat the elder women as mothers, the younger as ſiſters, with all purity.*

6. Mean time, how ſuitable to the friendlineſs of his ſpirit, was the *frankneſs* and *openneſs* of his converſation? Although it was far removed from rudeneſs on the one hand, as from guile and diſguiſe on the other. Was not this frankneſs at once a fruit and a proof of his *courage* and *intrepidity?* Armed with theſe, he feared not the faces of men, but *uſed great plainneſs of ſpeech* to perſons of every rank and condition, high and low, rich and poor: endeavouring only *by manifeſtation of the truth*, to *commend himſelf to every man's conſcience in the ſight of God.*

7. Neither was he afraid of labour or pain, any more than of *what man could do unto him*, being equally

" *Patient* in bearing ill and doing well."

And this appeared in the *ſteddineſs* wherewith he purſued whatever he undertook for his Maſter's ſake. Witneſs one inſtance for all, the Orphan-houſe in *Georgia*, which he began and perfected, in ſpite of all diſcouragements. Indeed, in whatever concerned himſelf, he was pliant and flexible. In this caſe he was *eaſy to be intreated*, eaſy to be either convinced or perſuaded. But he was immoveable in the things

of

of God, or wherever his conſcience was concerned. None could perſuade, any more than affright him, to vary in the leaſt point from that *integrity*, which was inſeparable from his whole character, and regulated all his words and actions. Herein he did

" Stand as an iron pillar ſtrong,
" And ſtedfaſt as a wall of braſs."

8. * If it be inquired, What was the foundation of this integrity, or of his ſincerity, courage, patience, and every other valuable and amiable quality, it is eaſy to give the anſwer. It was not the excellence of his natural temper: not the ſtrength of his underſtanding: it was not the force of education; no, nor the advice of his friends. It was no other than faith in a bleeding Lord; *Faith of the operation of God.* It was *a lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.* It was *the love of God ſhed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghoſt, which was given unto him,* filling his ſoul with tender, diſintereſted love to every child of man. From this ſource aroſe that torrent of *eloquence* which frequently bore down all before it: from this, that aſtoniſhing force of *perſuaſion*, which the moſt hardened ſinners could not reſiſt. This it was, which often made his *head as waters*, and his *eyes a fountain of tears.*

tears. This it was which enabled him to pour out his ſoul in *prayer*, in a manner peculiar to himſelf, with ſuch fulneſs and eaſe united together, with ſuch ſtrength and variety both of ſentiment and expreſſion.

9. * I may cloſe this head with obſerving, What an honour it pleaſed God to put upon his faithful ſervant, by allowing him to declare his everlaſting goſpel in ſo many various countries, to ſuch numbers of people, and with ſo great an effect, on ſo many of their precious ſouls! Have we read or heard of any perſon ſince the apoſtles, who teſtified the goſpel of the grace of God, through ſo widely extended a ſpace, through ſo large a part of the habitable world? Have we read or heard of any perſon who called ſo many thouſands, ſo many myriads of ſinners to repentance? Above all, have we read or heard of any, who has been a bleſſed inſtrument in his hand of *bringing* ſo many ſinners *from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God?* It is true, were we to talk thus to the gay world, we ſhould be judged to *ſpeak as barbarians.* But *you* underſtand the language of the country to which you are going, and whither our dear friend is gone a little before us.

III. But how ſhall we improve this awful providence? This is the *third* thing which we have to conſider. And the anſwer to this important queſtion

queſtion is eaſy ; (may God write it in all our hearts!) By keeping cloſe to the *grand doctrines* which he delivered: and by drinking into his *Spirit*.

1. And firſt, let us keep cloſe to the grand ſcriptural doctrines, which he every where delivered. There are many doctrines of a leſs eſſential nature, with regard to which, even the ſincere children of God (ſuch is the preſent weakneſs of human underſtanding!) are and have been divided for many ages. In theſe we may think and let think ; we may "agree to diſagree." But mean time let us hold faſt the eſſentials of *the faith, which was once delivered to the ſaints*; and which this champion of God ſo ſtrongly inſiſted on, at all times, and in all places.

2. His fundamental point was, Give God all the glory of whatever is good in man. And in the buſineſs of ſalvation, Set Chriſt as high, and man as low as poſſible. With this point, he and his friends at *Oxford*, the original *Methodiſts* (ſo called) ſet out. Their grand principle was, There is *no power* (by nature) and *no merit* in man. They inſiſted, all power to think, ſpeak, or act right, is in and from the Spirit of Chriſt: and all merit is (not in man, how high ſoever in grace, but merely) in the blood of Chriſt. So he and they taught: There is no power in man, till it is given him from above, to do one good work, to ſpeak one good word, or to form one good

good desire. For it is not enough to say, all men are *sick of sin*: no, we are all dead *in trespasses and sins*. It follows, that all the children of men are *by nature children of wrath*. We are all *guilty before God*, liable to death temporal and eternal.

3. And we are all helpless, both with regard to the power and to the guilt of sin. For *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* None less than the Almighty. Who can raise those that are *dead*, spiritually dead in sin? None but he who raised us from the dust of the earth. But on what consideration will he do this? *Not for works of righteousness that we have done. The dead cannot praise thee, O Lord!* Nor do any thing for the sake of which they should be raised to life. Whatever therefore God does, he does it merely for the sake of his well beloved Son; *he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. He himself bore all our sins in his own body upon the tree. He was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification.* Here then is the sole *meritorious cause* of every blessing we do or can enjoy: in particular of our pardon and acceptance with God, of our full and free justification. But by what means do we become interested in what Christ has done and suffered? *Not by works, lest any man should boast*; but by faith alone. *We conclude*, says the apostle, *that a man is justified by*

by faith, without the works of the law. And *to as many as* thus *receive him, giveth he power to become the ſons of God: even to thoſe that believe in his name, who are born, not of the will of man, but of God.*

4. And *except a man be thus born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God.* But all who are thus *born of the Spirit*, have *the kingdom of God within* them. Chriſt ſets up his kingdom in their hearts; *Righteouſneſs, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt.* That *mind is in them, which was in Chriſt Jeſus*, enabling them to *walk as Chriſt alſo walked.* His indwelling-Spirit makes them both holy in heart, and *holy in all manner of converſation.* But ſtill, ſeeing all this is a free gift, through the righteouſneſs and blood of Chriſt, there is eternally the ſame reaſon to remember, *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*

5. You are not ignorant, that theſe are the fundamental doctrines which he every where inſiſted on. And may they not be ſummed up, as it were, in two words, *The new birth*, and *juſtification by faith?* Theſe let us inſiſt upon with all boldneſs, at all times, and in all places: in public (thoſe of us who are called thereto) and at all opportunities, in private. Keep cloſe to theſe good, old, unfaſhionable doctrines, how many ſoever contradict and blaſpheme. Go on, my brethren, in the *name of the Lord, and in the power of his might.* With all care and diligence,

keep

keep that safe which is committed to your trust: knowing that *heaven and earth shall pass away; but* this truth *shall not pass away.*

6. But will it be sufficient, to keep close to his *doctrines*, how pure soever they are? Is there not a point of still greater importance than this, namely, to drink into his *spirit?* Herein to *be a follower of* him, *even as* he was *of Christ?* Without this, the purity of our doctrines, would only increase our condemnation. This therefore is the principal thing, to copy after his spirit. And allowing that in some points, we must be content, to *admire* what we cannot *imitate*: yet in many others we may, through the same free grace, be partakers of the same blessing. Conscious then of your own wants, and of his bounteous love, who *giveth liberally and upbraideth not*, cry to him that worketh all in all, for a measure of the same precious faith: of the same zeal and activity, the same tender-heartedness, charitableness, bowels of mercies. Wrestle with God for some degree of the same grateful, friendly, affectionate temper: of the same openness, simplicity, and godly sincerity. *Love without dissimulation.* Wrestle on, till the power from on high works in you the same steady courage and patience: and above all, because it is the crown of all, the same invariable integrity.

7. * Is there any other fruit of the grace of God, with which he was eminently endowed, and

and the want of which among the children of God he frequently and paſſionately lamented? There is one, that is, *Catholic love:* that ſincere and tender affection, which is due to all thoſe, who, we have reaſon to believe, are children of God by faith: in other words, all thoſe in every perſuaſion, who *fear God and work righteouſneſs.* He longed to ſee all who had *taſted of the good word*, of a truly *Catholic ſpirit*, (a word little underſtood and ſtill leſs experienced by many, who have it frequently in their mouth.) Who is he that anſwers this character? Who is a man of a *Catholic ſpirit?* One who loves as friends, as brethren in the Lord, as joint partakers of the preſent kingdom of heaven, and fellow-heirs of his eternal kingdom, all of whatever opinion, mode of worſhip, or congregation, who believe in the Lord Jeſus; who love God and man: who rejoicing to pleaſe, and fearing to offend God, are careful to abſtain from evil, and zealous of good works. He is a man of a truly Catholic ſpirit, who bears all theſe continually upon his heart: who having an unſpeakable tenderneſs for their perſons, and an earneſt deſire of their welfare, does not ceaſe to commend them to God in prayer, as well as to plead their cauſe before men: who ſpeaks comfortably to them, and labours by all his words, to ſtrengthen their hands in God. He aſſiſts them to the uttermoſt of his power, in all things, ſpiritual

and

and temporal. He is ready *to ſpend and to be ſpent* for them; yea, *to lay down his life for* his *brethren*.

8. How amiable a character is this? How deſirable to every child of God! But why is it then ſo rarely found? How is it, that there are ſo few inſtances of it? Indeed, ſuppoſing we have taſted of the love of God, how can any of us reſt, 'till it is our own? Why, there is a delicate device, whereby Satan perſuades thouſands, that they may ſtop ſhort of it, and yet be guiltleſs. It is well, if many here preſent are not in this *ſnare of the devil, taken captive at his will*. "O yes, ſays one, I have all this "love for thoſe I believe to be children of "God. But I will never believe, he is a child "of God, who belongs to that *vile congrega-* "*tion!* Can he, do you think, be a child of "God, who holds ſuch *deteſtable opinions?* "Or he that joins in ſuch ſenſeleſs and ſuper-"ſtitious, if not idolatrous *worſhip?*" So we juſtify ourſelves in one ſin, by adding a ſecond to it! We excuſe the want of love in ourſelves, by laying the blame on others. To colour our own deviliſh temper, we pronounce our brethren children of the devil. O beware of this! And if you are already taken in the ſnare, eſcape out of it as ſoon as poſſible. Go and learn that truly Catholic love, which *is not raſh or haſty* in judging: that love which *think-*

eth

eth no evil, which *believeth and hopeth all things:* which makes all the allowances for others, that we desire others should make for us. Then we shall take knowledge of the grace of God, which is in every man, whatever be his opinion or mode of worship. Then will all that fear God be near and dear unto us, *in the bowels of Jesus Christ.*

9. Was not this the spirit of our dear friend? And why should it not be ours? O thou God of love, how long shall thy people be a bye-word among the Heathen? How long shall they laugh us to scorn, and say, "See how *these* "Christians love one another?" When wilt thou roll away our reproach? *Shall the sword devour for ever? How long will it be, ere thou bid thy people return from following each other?* Now at least, *let all the people stand still, and pursue after* their brethren *no more!* But whatever others do, let all of us, my brethren, hear the voice of him that *being dead, yet speaketh!* Suppose ye hear him say, "Now at least, *be ye fol-* "*lowers of me as I was of Christ!* Let brother "*no more lift up sword* against brother, neither "*know ye war any more!* Rather *put ye on, as* "*the elect of God, bowels of mercies, humbleness* "*of mind, brotherly kindness, gentleness, long-suf-* "*fering, forbearing one another in love.* Let the "time past suffice for strife, envy, contention; "for *biting and devouring one another.* Blessed

"be

" be God, that ye have not long ago been *con-*
" *fumed one of another!* From henceforth hold
" ye *the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*"

10. O God, with thee no word is impoſſible: thou doſt whatſoever pleaſeth thee! O that thou wouldſt cauſe the mantle of thy prophet, whom thou haſt taken up, now to fall upon us that remain! *Where is the Lord God of Elijah? Let* his *ſpirit reſt upon* theſe thy ſervants! Shew thou art the God that *anſwereſt by fire!* Let the fire of thy love fall on every heart! And becauſe we love thee, let us love one another with a *love ſtronger than death. Take away from us* all *anger, and wrath, and bitterneſs; all clamour, and evil-ſpeaking.* Let thy Spirit ſo reſt upon us, that from this hour, we may be *kind to each other, tender-hearted: forgiving one another, even as God, for Chriſt's ſake, hath forgiven us!*

An HYMN.

SERVANT of God, well done!
Thy glorious warfare's paſt,
The battle's fought, the race is won,
And thou art crown'd at laſt;
Of all thy heart's deſire
Triumphantly poſſeſt,
Lodg'd by the miniſterial quire
In thy Redeemer's breaſt.

In

In condeſcending love
Thy ceaſeleſs prayer He heard,
And bad thee ſuddenly remove,
To thy complete reward:
Ready to bring the peace,
Thy beauteous feet were ſhod,
When mercy ſign'd thy ſoul's releaſe
And caught thee up to God.

With ſaints inthron'd on high
Thou doſt thy Lord proclaim,
And ſtill *to God ſavation* cry,
Salvation to the Lamb!
O happy, happy ſoul!
In extacies of praiſe,
Long as eternal ages roll,
Thou ſeeſt thy Saviour's Face.

Redeem'd from earth and pain,
Ah! when ſhall we aſcend,
And all in Jeſus' preſence reign
With our tranſlated Friend!
Come, Lord, and quickly come!
And when in Thee complete,
Receive thy longing ſervants home,
To triumph——at thy feet!

ADVICE

A D V I C E

To the People call'd METHODISTS,

With regard to DRESS.

I. 1. I AM not fond of saying the same thing over and over: especially when I have so many things to say, that the day of life (which with *me* is far spent) is not likely to suffice for them. But in some cases, it is needful for *you* that I should: and then, *it is not grievous* to me. And it may be best, to speak freely and fully at once, that there may be the less need of speaking on this head hereafter.

2. When we look into the bible with any attention, and then look round into the world, to see who *believes* and who *lives* according to this book: we may easily discern, that the system of *practice*, as well as the system of *truth* there delivered, is torn in pieces, and scattered abroad, like the members of *Absyrtus*. Every denomination of Christians retains some part either of Christian truth or practice: these hold fast one part, and those another, as their fathers did before them. What is the duty mean-time of those who desire to follow the whole word of God?

God? Undoubtedly to *gather up* all these *fragments, that* if possible *nothing be lost:* with all diligence to follow all those we see about us, so far as they follow the bible: and to join together in one scheme of truth and practice what almost all the world put asunder.

3. Many years ago I observed several parts of Christian Practice, among the people call'd *Quakers*. Two things I particularly remarked among them, Plainness of speech and plainness of dress. I willingly adopted both, with some restrictions, and particularly plainness of dress. The same I recommended to *you*, when God first called you out of the world: and after the addition of more than thirty years experience, I recommend it to you still.

4. But before I go any farther, I must intreat you, in the name of God, Be open to conviction. Whatever prejudices you have contracted from education, custom or example, divest yourselves of them, as far as possible. Be willing to receive light either from God or man: do not shut your eyes against it. Rather be glad to see more than you did before; to *have the eyes of your understanding opened*. Receive the truth in the love thereof, and you will have reason to bless God for ever.

II. 1. Not that I would advise you, to imitate the people called *Quakers*, in those little particu-

larities of dress, which can answer no possible end, but to distinguish them from all other people. To be singular, merely for singularity's sake, is not the part of a Christian. I do not therefore advise you, to wear a hat of such dimensions, or a coat of a particular form. Rather, in things that are absolutely indifferent, that are of no consequence at all, humility and courtesy require you to conform to the customs of your country.

2. But I advise you to imitate them, first, in the *Neatness* of their apparel. This is highly to be commended, and quite suitable to your Christian calling. Let all your apparel therefore be as clean as your situation in life will allow. It is certain, the poor can't be so clean as they would, as having little change of raiment. But let even these be as clean as they can, as care and diligence can keep them. Indeed they have particular need so to be; because cleanliness is one great branch of frugality. It is likewise more conducive to health, than is generally considered. Let the poor then especially labour to be clean, and provoke those of higher rank to jealousy.

3. I advise you to imitate them secondly, in the *Plainness* of their apparel. In this are implied two things; 1. That your apparel be cheap, not expensive; far cheaper than others in your circumstances wear, or than *you* would wear, if you knew not God: 2. That it be grave, not gay, airy, or showy; not in the point of the fashion. And these easy rules may be applied both to the materials

materials whereof it is made, and the manner wherein it is made or put on.

4. Would you have a farther rule, with reſpect to both? Then take one which you may always carry in your boſom. "Do every thing herein with a ſingle eye:" and this will direct you in every circumſtance. Let a ſingle intention to pleaſe God preſcribe, both what cloathing you ſhall buy, and the manner wherein it ſhall be made, and how you ſhall put on and wear it. To expreſs the ſame thing in other words: Let all you do in this reſpect, be ſo done, that you may offer it to God, a ſacrifice acceptable thro' Chriſt Jeſus. So that, conſequently, it may increaſe your reward, and brighten your crown in heaven. And ſo it will do, if it be agreeable to Chriſtian humility, ſerioufneſs and charity.

5. Shall I be more particular ſtill? Then I *exhort all thoſe who deſire me to watch over their ſouls*, Wear no gold, (whatever officers of ſtate may do; or magiſtrates, as the enſign of their office) no pearls or precious ſtones: uſe no curling of hair, or coſtly apparel, how grave ſoever. I *adviſe thoſe who are able to receive this ſaying*, Buy no velvets, no ſilks, no fine linen: no ſuperfluities, no *mere ornaments*, tho' ever ſo much in faſhion. Wear nothing, tho' you have it already, which is of a glaring colour, or which is in any kind gay, gliſtering, ſhowy; nothing made in the very height of the faſhion, nothing apt to attract the eyes of the by-ſtanders. I do not

adviſe women to wear rings, ear-rings, necklaces, Lace, (of whatever kind or colour) or ruffles, which by little and little may eaſily ſhoot out from one to twelve inches deep. Neither do I adviſe men, to wear coloured waiſtcoats, ſhining ſtockings, glittering or coſtly buckles or buttons, either on their coats or in their ſleeves, any more than gay, faſhionable or expenſive perukes. It is true, theſe are little, very little things: therefore they are not worth defending: therefore give them up, let them drop, throw them away, without another word. Elſe a little needle may cauſe much pain in your fleſh, a little ſelf-indulgence much hurt to your ſoul.

III. 1*ſt*. 2. For the preceding *exhortation*, I have the authority of God, in clear and expreſs terms. † *I will that women* (and by parity of reaſon, men too) *adorn themſelves in modeſt apparel, with ſhamefacedneſs and ſobriety, not with broidered* (curled) *hair, or gold, or pearls*, (one kind of precious ſtones, which was then moſt in uſe, put for all) *or coſtly apparel, but (which becometh women profeſſing godlineſs) with good works*. Again, § *Whoſe adorning let it not be that outward adorning, of plating* (curling) *the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel. But let it be—the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit, which is in the ſight of* God *of great price*. Nothing can be more expreſs, The wearing of gold, of precious ſtones, and of coſtly apparel, together with curling

† 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. § 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

ing of hair, is here forbidden by name: nor is there any reſtriction made either here or in any other ſcripture. Whoever therefore ſays, "There is no harm in theſe things," may as well ſay, There is no harm in ſtealing or adultery.

2. There is ſomething peculiary obſervable in the manner wherein both St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* ſpeak of theſe things. *Let not your adorning* (ſays St. *Peter*) *be that outward adorning*; *but let it be the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit.* The latter clauſe is not added barely to fill up the ſentence, but with ſtrong and weighty reaſon. For there is a direct contrariety (as little as we may ſuſpect it) between that outward and this inward adorning. And that, both with regard to their ſource, and with regard to their tendency. As to their ſource, all that adorning ſprings from nature; a meek and quiet ſpirit from grace: the former, from conforming to our own will and the will of man, the latter from conformity to the will of God. And as to their tendency; nothing more directly tends to deſtroy meekneſs and quietneſs of ſpirit, than all that outward adorning, whereby we ſeek to commend ourſelves, to men and not to God. For this cheriſhes all thoſe paſſions and tempers, which overthrow the quiet of every ſoul wherein they dwell.

3. *Let them adorn themſelves*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *not with curling of hair, or with gold, pearls, or coſtly apparel, but* (*which becometh women profeſſing godlineſs*) *with good works.* The latter clauſe is

here likewiſe added, for plain and weighty reaſons. For 1. That kind of adorning cannot ſpring from godlineſs, from either the love or fear of God, from a deſire of conforming to his will, or from the mind which was in Chriſt Jeſus. 2. It no way tends to increaſe godlineſs; it is not conducive to any holy temper. But 3. It manifeſtly tends to deſtroy ſeveral of the tempers moſt eſſential to godlineſs. It has no friendly influence on humility; whether we aim at pleaſing others or ourſelves hereby. Either in one caſe or the other, it will rather increaſe pride or vanity than lowlineſs of heart. It does not at all miniſter to the ſerioufneſs which becomes a ſinner born to die. It is utterly inconſiſtent with ſimplicity; no one uſes it, merely to pleaſe God. Whoever acts with a ſingle eye, does all things, to be ſeen and approved of God; and can no more *dreſs*, than he can *pray*, or give alms, *to be ſeen of men*.

7. "O! but one may be as humble in velvet and embroidery, as another is in ſackcloth." True: for a perſon may wear ſackcloth, and have no humility at all. The heart may be filled with pride and vanity, whatever the raiment be. Again; women under the yoke of unbelieving parents or huſbands, as well as men in office, may on ſeveral occaſions be *conſtrained*, to put on gold or coſtly apparel. And in caſes of this kind, plain experience ſhews, that the baleful influence of it is ſuſpended. So that wherever it is not our choice but our croſs, it may conſiſt with

with godlineſs, with a meek and quiet ſpirit, with lowlineſs of heart, with Chriſtian ſeriouſneſs. But it is not true, that any one can *chuſe* this, from a ſingle eye to pleaſe God; or conſequently, without ſuſtaining great loſs, as to lowlineſs and every other Chriſtian temper.

8. But however this be, can you be adorned at the ſame time with *coſtly apparel*, and with *good works?* That is, in the *ſame degree* as you might have been, had you beſtowed leſs coſt on your apparel? You know this is impoſſible: the more you expend on the one, the leſs you have to expend on the other. Coſtlineſs of apparel, in every branch, is therefore immediately, directly, inevitably deſtructive of good works. You ſee a brother, for whom Chriſt died, ready to periſh for want of needful cloathing. You would give it him gladly: but alas! *It is corban, whereby he might have been profited.* It is given already: not indeed for the ſervice of God; not to the treaſury of the temple: but either to pleaſe the folly of others, or to feed vanity, or the luſt of the eye in yourſelf. Now (even ſuppoſe theſe were harmleſs tempers, yet) what an unſpeakable loſs is this, if it be really true, that *every man ſhall receive his own reward, according to his own labour!* If there is indeed a reward in heaven, for every work of faith, for every degree of the labour of love!

2*dly*. 1. As to the *advice* ſubjoined, it is eaſy to obſerve, that all thoſe ſmaller things are, in

their degree, liable to the ſame objections as the greater. If they are gay, ſhowy, pleaſing to the eye, the putting them on does not ſpring from a ſingle view to pleaſe God. It neither flows from, nor tends to advance a meek and quiet ſpirit. It does not ariſe from, nor any way promote, real, vital godlineſs.

2. And if they are in any wiſe coſtly, if they are purchaſed with any unneceſſary expence, they cannot but in proportion to that expence, be deſtructive of good works. Of conſequence they are deſtructive of that charity, which is fed thereby: hardening our heart againſt the cry of the poor and needy, by inuring us to ſhut up our bowels of compaſſion toward them.

3. At leaſt, all unneceſſary expences of this kind, whether ſmall or great, are ſenſeleſs and fooliſh. This we may defy any man living to get over, if he allows there is another world. For there is no reward in heaven for laying out your money in ornaments or coſtly apparel: whereas you may have an eternal reward, for whatever you expend on earth.

4. Conſider this more cloſely. Here are two ways propoſed of laying out ſuch a ſum of money. I may lay it out in expenſive apparel for myſelf, or in neceſſary clothing for my neighbour. The former will pleaſe my own eye, or that of others: the latter will pleaſe God. Now ſuppoſe there were no more harm in one than in the other, in that which pleaſes man, than in that

that which pleaſes God: is there as much good in it? If they are equally innocent, are they equally wiſe? By the one, I gratify the deſire of the eye, and gain a pleaſure that periſhes in the uſing: by the other, I gain a larger ſhare of thoſe pleaſures that are at God's right hand for evermore. By the former I obtain the applauſe of man; by the latter, the praiſe of God. In this way, I meet with the admiration of fools: in that, I hear from the Judge of All, *Well done, good and faithful ſervant! Enter thou into the joy of thy* Lord.

5. Brethren, whatever ye are accounted by men, I would not have you fools in God's account. *Walk ye circumſpectly, not as fools, but as wiſe*; not in thoſe ways which God *may poſſibly forgive*; (to put things in the moſt favourable light) but in thoſe which he *will certainly reward. In wickedneſs be ye children* ſtill; *but in underſtanding be ye men.* I want to ſee a viſible body of people, who are a ſtanding example of this wiſdom; a pattern of doing all things, great and ſmall, with an eye to God and eternity.

IV. 1. But we may be aſſured, the wiſdom of the world will find out abundance of objections to this. Accordingly it is objected, firſt, "If God has given us plentiful fortunes, if we are placed in the higher ranks of life, we muſt act ſuitably to our fortune. We ought then to dreſs according to our rank, that is, in gold and coſtly

apparel." Not to infiſt, that none of *you* are of this rank, I anſwer, Where is this written? Our Saviour once occaſionally ſaid, *Behold, they who wear gorgeous* (ſplendid) *apparel, are in king's courts:* but he does not ſay, they *ought* to be even there: he neither enjoins, nor countenances it. And where is this either enjoined or allowed, by him or any of his apoſtles? Bring me plain, ſcriptural proof for your aſſertion, or I cannot allow it.

2. "But did not God give expreſs command by *Moſes*, that ſome even among his choſen people ſhould be adorned in the moſt exquiſite manner, with gold and precious ſtones and coſtly array?" Indeed he did: he expreſsly commanded this, with regard to *Aaron*, and his ſucceſſors in the high-prieſthood. But to this I anſwer, firſt, this direction which God gave, with regard to the Jewiſh high-prieſt, can certainly affect no perſon in *England*, unleſs the Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*. And I apprehend, he does not plead the precedent. Secondly, The Jews and we are under different diſpenſations. The glory of the whole Moſaic diſpenſation, was chiefly viſible and external: whereas the glory of the Chriſtian diſpenſation, is of an inviſible and ſpiritual nature.

3. "But what then are gold and precious ſtones for? Why have they a place in the creation?" What if I ſay, I cannot tell? There are abundance of things in the creation, which I do not

not know the use of. What are crocodiles, lions, tigers, scorpions for? Why have so many poisons a place in the creation? Some of them are for medicine: but whatever they are for, in whatever manner they may be useful, they are certainly not to be used in such a manner as God has expressly forbidden.

4. "But if they were not thus adorned, Kings and Generals would be despised by their subjects and soldiers." Supposing they would, that is nothing to *you*; for you are neither Kings nor Generals. But it is absolutely certain, they would not, if they were not despised on other accounts. If they are valiant and wise, they will never be despised, for the plainness of their dress. Was ever General or King more esteemed or beloved by his subjects and soldiers than King *Charles* of *Sweden*? And 'tis sure, he wore no gold or costly apparel, not so much as a common officer. But we need not go so many years back. Who is the Prince that is now honoured and beloved both by his subjects and soldiers, far beyond any other King or General in *Europe*? There is no need to repeat his name. But does he gain this honour and love, by the costliness of his apparel? So far from it, that he rarely uses any other dress, than the uniform of his own guards.

5. "But if all men were to dress like him, how would tradesmen live?" I answer, 1. God certainly considered this, or ever he gave these commands. And he would never have given

them, had he not seen, that if they were universally observed, men in general would live better than they otherwise could: better in this world, as well as that to come. But, 2. There is no danger at all, that they should be universally observed. Only a little flock in any civilized nation will observe them, till the knowledge of God covers the earth. 3. If those who do observe them, employ the money they thus save, in the most excellent manner, then a part of what before only served to fat a few rich tradesmen for hell, will suffice to feed and clothe and employ many poor, that seek the kingdom of heaven. 4. And *how* will those tradesmen themselves *live?* They will live like men, by honest labour, most of whom before lived like swine, wallowing in all gluttony and sensuality. But, 5. This is all mere trifling. It is only a copy of your countenance. For it is not this, it is not a regard to trade, or the good of the nation, that makes you disobey God. No: it is pride, vanity, or some other sinful temper, which is the real cause of these sinful actions.

6. "But we cannot carry on our own trade, without dressing like other people." If you mean only, conforming to those customs of your country, that are neither gay, nor costly, why should you not "dress like other people?" I really think you should. Let an Englishman dress like other Englishmen; not like a Turk or a Tartar. Let an English woman dress like other

other Engliſh women; not like a French woman or a German. But if you mean "conformity to them in what God has forbidden," the anſwer is ready at hand. If you can't carry on your trade without breaking God's command, you muſt not carry it on. But I doubt the fact: I know no trade which may not be carried on, by one who uſes plain and modeſt apparel. I fear, therefore, this too is but a copy of your countenance: you *love* theſe things, and therefore think them neceſſary. Your heart carries away your judgment: if you were not *fond* of them, you would never dream of their neceſſity.

7. In one ſingle caſe theſe things may be neceſſary, that is, unavoidable, namely, that of women who are under the yoke of ſelf-willed, unreaſonable huſbands or parents. Such may be conſtrained to do in ſome degree, what otherwiſe they would not. And they are blameleſs herein, if 1. They uſe all poſſible means, arguments, intreaties, to be excuſed from it; and when they cannot prevail, 2. Do it juſt ſo far as they are conſtrained, and no farther.

V. 1. And now, brethren, what remains, but that I beſeech you who are not under the yoke, who are, under God, the directors of your own actions, to ſet prejudice, obſtinacy, faſhion aſide; and yield to ſcripture, to reaſon, to truth. Suppoſe, as ſome affirm, you acted on no higher motive

motive than to please *me* herein, I know not that you would have need to be ashamed; even this you might avow in the face of the sun. You owe something to *me:* perhaps it is not my fault, if ye owe not your own souls also. If then you did an indifferent thing, only on this principle, not to give me any uneasiness, but to oblige, to comfort me in my labour, would you do much amiss? How much more may you be excused in doing what I advise, when truth, reason and scripture advise the same? When the thing in question is not an indifferent thing, but clearly determined by God himself?

2. Some years ago, when I first landed at *Savannah* in *Georgia*, a gentlewoman told me, "I assure you, Sir, you will see as *well-dressed* a congregation on Sunday, as most you have seen in *London*." I did so: and soon after I took occasion to expound those scriptures which relate to dress, and to press them freely upon my audience, in a plain and close application. All the time that I afterward ministered at *Savannah*, I saw neither gold in the church, nor costly apparel. But the congregation in general was almost constantly cloathed in plain, clean linen or woollen.

3. And why should not my advice, grounded on scripture and reason, weigh with *you* as much as with them? I will tell you why. 1. You are surrounded with saints of the world, persons fashionably, reputably religious. And these are constant

conſtant oppoſers of all, who would go farther in religion than themſelves. Theſe are continually warning you againſt running into extremes, and ſtriving to beguile you from the ſimplicity of the goſpel. 2. You have near you ſtill more dangerous enemies than theſe, Antinomians, whether *German* or *Engliſh*; who when any Chriſtian practiſe is enforced, come in with the cookoo's note, "The law, the law;" and while they themſelves glory in their ſhame, make you aſhamed of what ſhould be your glory. 3. You have ſuffered by falſe teachers of our own, who undermined the doctrine you had received: negatively, in publicly, by not inſiſting upon it, by not exhorting you to dreſs as perſons profeſſing godlineſs: (and, not to ſpeak *for* a Chriſtian duty, is in effect to ſpeak *againſt* it:) and poſitively in private, either by jeſting upon your exactneſs in obſerving the ſcripture-rule, or by inſinuations, which if you did not mind them then, yet would afterward weaken your ſoul. 4. You have been, and are at this day *in perils among falſe brethren:* I mean, not only thoſe of other congregations, who count *ſtrictneſs* all one with *bondage:* but many of our own; in particular thoſe, who were once clearly convinced of the truth: but they have ſinned away that conviction themſelves, and now endeavour to harden others againſt it: at leaſt, by example; by returning again to the folly, from which they were once clean eſcaped. But what is the example

of

of all mankind, when it runs counter to ſcripture and reaſon? I have warned you a thouſand times, not to regard any example, which contradicts reaſon or ſcripture. If it ever ſhould be (pray, that it may not be; but if it ever ſhould) that I or my brother, my wife, or his, or all of us together, ſhould ſet an example contrary to ſcripture and reaſon: I intreat you, regard it not at all: ſtill let ſcripture and reaſon prevail.

4. * You who have paſſed the morning, perhaps the noon of life, who find the ſhadows of the evening approach, ſet a better example to thoſe that are to come, to the now-riſing generation. With you the day of life is far ſpent; the night of death is at hand. You have no time to loſe: ſee that you redeem every moment that remains. Remove every thing out of the way, be it ever ſo ſmall (tho' indeed gay or coſtly apparel is not ſo) that might any ways obſtruct your lowlineſs and meekneſs, your ſeriouſneſs of ſpirit, your ſingle intention to glorify God, in all your thoughts and words and actions. Let no needleſs expence hinder your being in the higheſt degree you poſſible can, *rich in good works: ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate*, till you are cloathed with glory and immortality.

* Our carcaſes will ſoon fall into the duſt: then let the ſurvivors adorn them with flowers. Mean time let us regard thoſe ornaments only, that will accompany us into eternity.

5. * You

5. * You that are in the morning of your days, either your form is agreeable, or it is not. If it is not, do not make your perſon remarkable: rather let it lie hid in common apparel. On every account, it is your wiſdom, to recommend yourſelf to the eye of the mind: but eſpecially to the eye of God, who reads the ſecrets of your hearts, and in whoſe ſight the incorruptible ornaments alone are of great price. But if you would recommend yourſelf by dreſs, is any thing comparable to plain neatneſs? What kind of perſons are thoſe, to whom you could be recommended by gay or coſtly apparel? None that are any way likely to make you happy: this pleaſes only the fillieſt and worſt of men. At moſt, it gratifies only the fillieſt and worſt principle in thoſe who are of a nobler character.

6. * To you whom God has intruſted with a more pleaſing form, thoſe ornaments are quite needleſs,

"The adorning thee with ſo much art
Is but a barbarous ſkill:
'Tis like the poiſoning of a dart,
Too apt before to kill."

That is, to expreſs ourſelves in plain Engliſh, without any figure of poetry, it only tends to drag them faſter into death everlaſting, who were going faſt enough before, by additional provocations to luſt, or at leaſt, inordinate affection.

Did

Did you actually *design* to raise either of these, in those who looked upon you? What, while you and they were in the more immediate presence of God? What profaneness and inhumanity mixt together! But if you designed it not, did you not *foresee* it? You might have done so, without any extraordinary sagacity. "Nay, I did not care or think about it." And do you say this by way of excuse? You *scatter abroad arrows, firebrands and death*; and do not care or think about it!

7. * O let us all walk more charitably and more wisely for the time to come! Let us all cast aside from this very hour, whatever does not become men and *women professing godliness:* whatever does not spring from the love and fear of God, and minister thereto. Let our seriousness *shine before men*, not our dress: let all who see us know that we are not of this world. Let our adorning be that which fadeth not away, even righteousness and true holiness. If ye regard not weakening my hands and grieving my spirit, yet grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. Do you ask, "But what shall I do with the gay or costly apparel, and with the ornaments I have already? Must I suffer them to be lost? Ought I not to wear them now I have them?" I answer, There is no loss like that of using them: wearing them is the greatest loss of all. But what then shalt thou do with them? Burn them rather than wear them; throw them into the depth of the

the ſea. Or if thou canſt with a clear conſcience, ſell them, and give the money to them that want. But buy no more at the peril of thy ſoul. Now be a faithful ſteward. After providing for thoſe of thine own houſhold things needful for life and godlineſs, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, relieve the ſick, the priſoner, the ſtranger, with all that thou haſt. Then ſhall God clothe thee with glory and honour, in the preſence of men and angels: and thou ſhalt *ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament*, yea, *as the ſtars for ever and ever*.

THE

THE DUTIES OF HUSBANDS and WIVES.

I AM perſuaded, it is not poſſible for me to write any thing ſo full, ſo ſtrong, and ſo clear on this ſubject, as has been written near an hundred and fifty years ago, by a perſon of equal ſenſe and piety. I ſhall therefore only abridge what he has written on the head, with ſome few alterations and additions. I beſeech you all, who are more immediately concerned, to read it with the calmeſt attention, and with earneſt prayer, that what is here written, may be tranſcribed into your hearts and lives.

CHAP. I.

The firſt duty of the Married, Chaſtity.

1. THIS duty is ſo manifeſt, that no perſon whatever can pretend ignorance of it. The law of God, the law of nature, and the laws of all well ordered ſocieties enjoin it.

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The violation of this unties the marriage-knot, and diſſolves the marriage-covenant. For our Lord himſelf, who utterly diſallows of other divorces, yet allows divorce in caſe of adultery. "But may the perſon wronged admit the wrong-doer again, after the offence is known?" I anſwer, they may, provided the offender give full, ſatisfactory proof of amendment. We read not any command to the contrary. But if the offender perſiſt in ſin, then the innocent perſon, having full proof thereof, is bound to withdraw from the ſinner.

2. Let any who find ſtrong temptations to this ſin, 1. Conſtantly and conſcientiouſly perform private duties. The bleſſing of God hereon will make him conqueror, over what before ſeemed moſt unconquerable. 2. Be diligent in your calling, that you may have no leiſure for inflaming imaginations. It is certain, an idle perſon, if occaſion and conſtitution ſerve, will ſooner or later prove adulterous. But diligence joined with hearty prayer, will preſerve a man pure and undefiled. 3. Be exactly temperate. It is eaſy to put out the fierceſt fire, by withdrawing the fewel. If therefore you would be chaſte in your marriage, be ſparing in your food. 4. Carefully ſhun every temptation and all opportunities of ſin: eſpecially, ſhun as a rock the company of any perſon apt to tempt, or to be tempted: and conſider, that the coldeſt water will be hot, if it be ſet near the fire.

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3. These directions are such as agree to all, married or unmarried. There remains another help peculiar to the former, the due use of marriage. The ordinances of God will answer their end, if our abuse of them do not hinder. Now God has ordained marriage for this end, among others, to prevent fornication. Wherefore let it be used in the manner it ought, and it will surely answer its end. And in this respect, *the wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband.* Neither *hath the husband power over his own body, but the wife.* It is not in the choice of either, whether to live with the other, or not. But they are bound in conscience so to do, and cannot refuse it without grievous sin. There may indeed be a separation for a time, if needful affairs require. But it is not lawful for either the man or the woman to leave the other totally or finally.

4. In this their society two things are to be observed, that it be sanctified and temperate. First, it must be *sanctified*, that is, made lawful and holy to them *by the word of* God *and prayer.* The word of God clearly shews the lawfulness of it. For God has said expressly, *Marriage is honourable among all men, and the bed undefiled.* But let it also be *sanctified* or made holy *by prayer.* Solemnly pray for the blessing of God upon his ordinance, not forgetting to return him particular thanks for his infinite goodness herein. That this is requisite none can deny, that will not de-

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by the authority of St. *Paul*. For he affirms, that marriage, as well as meat and drink, is sanctified by *prayer and thanksgiving*. As therefore it is a brutish profaneness, for any man to sit down to his table, as an horse to the manger, without asking the blessing of God first, and to return from it, as a fox from his prey, without praising him that gave him food and appetite; so it is great licentiousness for married persons to come together, as it were brute beasts, without either prayer or thanksgiving. The hope of posterity, the stay of old age, the support of every man's house, the supply of the church and common-wealth, hang upon the fruit of marriage. Is it then more than needs, to ask the blessing of God in a thing of so great importance? Surely we should bring his curse upon us, were we either to forget it as needless, or despise it as ridiculous. Yea, whereas marriage is instituted in part for the subduing inordinate desires, it cannot answer that end, without God's blessing; which how can we expect, if we scorn to ask it? Certainly, the men that use marriage in a brutish manner, not seeing God therein, nor sanctifying it to themselves by these means, will thereby become more and more brutish. Wherefore let no man scoff at a duty plainly commanded by God: but let us learn to know the full efficacy of prayer, and to reap the fruit of it in all things.

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5. It muſt, ſecondly, Be temperate. We are always to remember, God ordained marriage chiefly for the increaſe of mankind, and not to kindle luſtful deſires, but to quench them. I confeſs, we ſhould take great heed of laying ſnares upon mens conſciences, and muſt be very careful not to bind them, where God has not bound them. But this is a ſure rule: the quantity of every thing, muſt be ſuited to the end. This being conſidered, the married are not to provoke deſires, but allay them, when they provoke themſelves. They muſt not ſtrive to inflame the paſſions when they are cool, but when they are moved of themſelves, to aſſuage them. In a word, marriage ſhould be uſed as ſparingly, as conſiſts with the need of the perſons married. A temperate uſe promotes purity: exceſs inflames luſt, and inclines to adultery. Wherefore the foregoing rule ſhould be carefully obſerved, that the married come no oftener together, than is needful to extinguiſh natural deſires, when they would otherwiſe become troubleſome to them. Now the ſanctified uſe of marriage is alſo an help to the temperate uſe of it. But they ſeldom fail to exceed, who do not take care to make all things holy by *prayer and thankſgiving*.

6. Perhaps one might add, it ſhould ever be accompanied with chearfulneſs and willingneſs. They muſt neither deny themſelves to each other, nor behave with grudging and forwardneſs:

nefs; but rather with readineſs and all demonſtrations of ſincere affection. The ſcripture plainly teſtifies this, by the very term *benevolence* or *good-will*. For no man can call that good-will, which is done churliſhly and diſcontentedly: a behaviour that naturally tends to alienate the heart, and create ſuſpicions of eſtrangement of affection.

CHAP. II.

Of the Love *of married Perſons.*

1. THE marriage-covenant binds all that enter into it, to ſeveral other duties, as well as to chaſtity: but not under the ſame forfeiture, failing in theſe breaks God's command, but does not break the bond of matrimony. No ill-behaviour diſſolves this, while we are not wronged as to the marriage-bed. Thou art ſtill an huſband or a wife, though thy yoke-fellow is wanting in many duties. Be careful therefore to do thy own part ſtill, however ſlenderly thou art requited.

2. The duties common to huſbands and wives, partly reſpect themſelves, and partly their families. All the former ſort may be reduced to two heads, love and the fruits of love. Firſt, Love: their hearts muſt be united as well as their hands: elſe their union will be more troubleſome than can be imagined. Love is the life

and foul of marriage, without which it differs from itself as a carcase from a living body. This makes all things easy, whereas the absence of it makes all things hard. Love seasons and sweetens every state; love composes all controversies. In whomsoever love prevails, to them only marriage is what it should be, a pleasing combination of two persons into one home, one purse, one heart and one flesh. And this love must have two especial properties, first, It must be spiritual; secondly, matrimonial. It must be spiritual in its ground, and in its working. Its chief ground must be the commandment of God. A Christian must love his wife, not only because she is beautiful or loving, but chiefly because God enjoins it. The wife must love her husband, not only because he is handsome, kind or well-behaved, but because God the sovereign of all souls, has commanded women to be *lovers of their own husbands*. Not the face, portion or good qualities of the married, must be the chief cause of their loving each other, but the will of God; and that affection which stands on this stable foundation will be lasting: while that which stands on any other consideration, will be subject to change every hour. For how can the building stand fast, if the foundation sink away? Either some storm of contention will overthrow that love, or it will fall down of itself thro' age. Or else it will degenerate into jealousy, the devouring canker-worm, that eats up the hearts of married persons, and consumes or spoils the

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ſweet fruit they may reap. But he that loves his wife, becauſe ſhe is his wife, and God commands him to love her as ſuch, will love her, ſo long as ſhe is his wife, whatever ſhe prove beſide. Thou loveſt thy wife, becauſe ſhe is fair, good-humoured, courteous: but what if all theſe ſhould fail? Thou loveſt thy huſband, becauſe he is handſome, ſenſible, kind: but where will thy love be, if theſe things ſhould alter? You ſee there is no firmneſs in that love, which is procured only by theſe motives. But if thou love thy wife or huſband, becauſe God enjoins it, then thy love will be conſtant and perpetual.

3. This property of love, that it is ſpiritual, built on the rock of God's commandment, anſwers all the objections which many would make againſt it in their own caſes. "Who, ſays a man, can love ſuch a wife?" "And what wife, ſays a woman, can love ſuch an huſband?" I anſwer, a man whoſe affection is ſpiritual, can love even ſuch a wife. And the woman who has attained to ſpiritual love finds it poſſible to love even ſuch an huſband.

4. But as the ground of their love muſt be ſpiritual, ſo muſt alſo the working thereof. It muſt ſeek the ſpiritual good of the perſon beloved, by every poſſible means. For that love which ſeeks only their temporal welfare, deſerves no better name than carnal love. But ſurely thoſe who love each other, becauſe God bids them, will love each other as God bids them. They will be careful of each others

ſouls, as well as of their bodies and eſtates. But alas! How exceedingly does the love of moſt married people fail herein? Thou art kind to thy wife or huſband, and it goes to thy heart, to think any thing ſhould be wanting for their good. It is well; but ſo may a Turk as well as thou, if by good, thou meaneſt only that which is temporal. But doſt thou ſeek to help thy yoke-fellow to heavenly, as well as earthly benefits? This is ſpiritual love: this becomes a Chriſtian huſband, and a Chriſtian wife. Be not then *carnal* in your love, *walking as men*, but ſpiritual as the children of God.

5. * But remember farther, that your love muſt be matrimonial, as well as ſpiritual. It muſt be matrimonial, with regard, 1. To the degree, and 2. To the effect of it. For the firſt, A man ſhould love his wife, a woman her huſband, above all the creatures in the world. Next to the living God, the wife is to have the higheſt place in the huſband's heart, and he in her's. No neighbour, no friend, no parent, no child, ſhould be ſo near and dear to either as the other. They are joined in the cloſeſt of all unions; therefore their mutual affection ſhould be moſt abundant. They muſt do more and ſuffer more for each other, than for any other in all the world. They muſt bear with more faults in each other than any beſides, and be ready to take more pains for each other.

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5. Secondly, As to the effect of this love, it ſhould knit them together, that they may receive full ſatisfaction in each other. Love ſhould cauſe a man to account his wife the only woman in the world: and ſo the wife to account her huſband the only man in the world. The perſons of each ſhould be to the other the moſt precious of all perſons. Do any object, this cannot be, unleſs every man and every woman, could find in their own yoke-fellow as amiable qualities as are to be found in others: I anſwer, not the good qualities of either, but the good pleaſure of God is the ground of their mutual dearneſs. Good qualities make this duty more eaſy: but it is ſtill a duty, tho' good qualities be away. A man may lawfully think another woman a better woman than his own wife. But he may not love another woman, tho' more virtuous, above his own, tho' leſs virtuous. This is the effect of matrimonial love, to ſettle the heart of each upon the other, above all in the world beſides. It admits of none equal in affection, but places the yoke-fellow next to our own ſoul. Nor will it bear the deſire of change, but ſo links their hearts together, that in this reſpect they are only dear to each other.

7. The means to get and confirm this love, is to have one houſe, one table, one bed. But beſides this natural means of procuring love, there are two ſpiritual means. The one is, to take ſpecial notice, of God's gracious providence in their match. They muſt often conſider, that

God joined them together, for their mutual benefit, as being on the whole fitter for each other, than any perſon beſides could be. We know, that a mean gift is often reſpected, for the giver's ſake. And he that loveth God, cannot but love all his bleſſings for his ſake. Wherefore remember, that God in great goodneſs (for croſſes alſo come to God's children from his goodneſs) hath beſtowed this yoke-fellow, and thou ſhalt dearly love thy wife or huſband, tho' perhaps not ſo well-tempered. For the dearneſs of the giver will countervail the defects of the gift. And then thy yoke-fellow's diſtempers will grieve thee indeed, but not alienate thy affection.

8. Another means of uniting your ſouls is, conſtantly to join in exerciſes of piety. Pray together: ſing together: confer together, concerning your heavenly country. And this will be found an excellent means of confirming your mutual love. Theſe will nouriſh the Spirit of holineſs in you: and that inkindles love wherever it comes. By theſe you will ſoon perceive yourſelves to have been ſpiritually profitable to each other: and to receive a ſpiritual benefit cannot but beget and nouriſh ſpiritual affection. Naturally you would grow weary of each other: but if you ſeaſon your natural communion, with this communion in ſpiritual things, it will prevent all fatiety. Jars and contentions are the great hindrances of love; but the joining together in theſe exerciſes, will cauſe

cauſe you to jar far more ſeldom: nor will any ſudden jar feſter or rankle, ſo as to breed hard thoughts of one another, which are the bane of love. Prayer will prevent moſt contentions and compoſe all: for when you ſhall appear before God in prayer, inſtead of blaming each other, you will each blame yourſelf, and then all contention will ceaſe.

9. But ſome may ſay, "What ſhall I do, who have ſuch an huſband or wife, as neither can nor will join with me, in the ſervice of God?" I anſwer, pray for that yoke-fellow, who will not pray with thee. The leſs able or willing they are to intreat for themſelves, the more frequently and earneſtly intreat God for them. It may be, God will give thee thy deſire, and turn their hearts to thee. At leaſt, thy own ſoul will gain an increaſe of heavenly love to them. And this is ſure, that to love your yoke-fellow ſpiritually and fervently, tho' you are not loved again, is far better, than to be loved of them, without ſo loving.

CHAP. III.

Of the Effects of Love.

1. THE effects of nuptial love are three, Pleaſingneſs, Faithfulneſs, Helpfulneſs. The firſt, which muſt mix itſelf with all the reſt,

is an earneſt deſire to pleaſe each other, ſo far as it is poſſible to be done, without ſinning againſt God. Wherefore the huſband muſt do or leave undone, any thing he can, that he may pleaſe his wife: and the wife muſt in any thing croſs her own deſires that ſhe may ſatisfy his. In diet, attire, choice of company, and all things elſe, each muſt fulfill the other's deſire, as abſolutely as can be done, without tranſgreſſing the law of God. As difficult as this may ſeem at firſt, practice will make it eaſy. Reſolutely begin, and the proceeding will be pleaſanter than the beginning. Eſpecially if both labour together, each ſeeking to oblige the other. For it cannot be difficult to ſatisfy one, who deſires to take as well as to give ſatisfaction.

2. But ſome will ſay, "This ſuits not me nothing will ſatisfy my froward yoke-fellow." I anſwer, It may be ſo: it is not in ones power, to make a froward perſon take a thing well. But it is in your power, to do your beſt, to ſatisfy ſuch an one; and to ſtrive the more, the more averſe to peace your companion is. "But it is hard, to be ſtill ſtriving againſt the ſtream." It is; but duties muſt not be omitted becauſe they are hard. The ſcholar, who has an hard leſſon, muſt take the more pains to learn it. So the huſband or wife, that has a perverſe companion, muſt take the more pains to pleaſe them. Let the difficulty therefore make thee more diligent: and encourage thyſelf in this tedious labour, by thinking,

thinking, " If after all I cannot pleaſe my yoke-fellow, I ſhall not fail to pleaſe God." Yea, and the harder the work is, the better he will take it at my hands. Therefore I will ſo behave, that they may receive content in all things, if any thing but ſin will content them." This caution indeed we muſt obſerve; for we may not, to pleaſe any one, ſin againſt God. If any thing but ſin will ſatisfy, thou muſt do it, be it ever ſo contrary to thy own will. But if thou canſt not fulfill the deſires of a creature, without breaking the law of God, then thou muſt not fulfill them: better offend a mortal man, than the immortal God.

3. In the next place, huſband and wife are to be faithful and helpful to each other. Theſe two muſt always be united: therefore we ſpeak of them together. This was the principal thing which God deſigned in the creation of the woman. *It is not good*, ſaith he, *for man to be alone: I will make him an help meet for him.* And undoubtedly man was intended to give, as well as to receive help. This helpful fidelity conſiſts in their mutual care to abſtain from and prevent whatever might grieve or hurt either: and to do themſelves, and incite others to do, whatever might comfort or benefit either. And this muſt extend to the ſoul, the body, the name, and the eſtate.

4. Firſt, to the ſouls, by provoking each other on all occaſions, to inward and outward holineſs. The huſband muſt further the wife in all goodneſs, and the wife the huſband: for ſhe has alſo liberty to ſtir up her huſband, by intreaty

and fair means. And as they have ſpecial opportunity, ſo they ſhould be always ready, with ſpecial diligence, to *provoke one another to love and to good works.* O how ſweet is the ſociety when they thus watch all occaſions to further each other in godlineſs! Again; being continually together, they may diſcover in each other divers corruptions and imperfections. They muſt not turn theſe into matter of contempt, but of compaſſion and care for each others reformation. They ſhould obſerve each others temper, 'till they perceive what infirmities each is chiefly inclined to, and then diligently abſtain from what may provoke that evil, and apply all means that may heal it. If all their labour does not avail, they muſt not fear to ſeek the help of ſome common friend, who poſſibly may effect that cure, which themſelves had endeavoured in vain. And if even this does not ſucceed, ſtill they muſt wait and pray, referring the matter to God, the only phyſician of the ſoul, who is able in due time to redreſs all.

5. The ſame faithful helpfulneſs they owe, to the bodies of each other. They muſt ſhun all things that might cauſe ſickneſs or pain to each other, and readily undergo any pains or coſt, according to their power, to procure whatever is neceſſary either to keep or recover their health. They muſt comfort each other, in the days of ſorrow, that worldly ſorrow work not death. The wife

wife must be health to her husband in his sickness: she must support his weakness, and he her's. Sickness and weakness are things which of themselves are hard enough to be borne: There needs not the addition of unkindness to make the burden heavier. Let every husband and wife avoid or mend this fault, and be particularly careful of their behaviour, at that time above all, when either is visited with grief, or weakness, or sickness. When your wife is sick or pain'd, then comfort her with loving words, and chear her by a tender countenance. Then see that she want no looking too, no help which thou canst procure. When thy husband is sick or weak, then stay him with comfortable speech, revive him with diligent attendance. Do all thou canst, to ease his pain, and to recover his strength. Let thy love and care be his best physic, and thyself his best physician. This is to be faithful to thy husband's body, and to "cherish him in sickness as in health."

6. In the third place, man and wife must be faithfully helpful to each others names, and that in a double respect: in maintaining them both between themselves and also among others. First, they must hold fast a good opinion of each other, so far as it may possibly stand with truth. Yea, it is no blame for them to have somewhat too good an opinion of each other: for a man to think his wife not only more handsome, but more wise and good than she is; (making her virtues carry a

greater ſhow to the eye, by looking at them thro' the glaſs of love:) and for her to think him not only more proper, but more kind and good than he really is, by taking things with that largeneſs of good interpretation, which much love naturally puts upon them. Certainly then they ſhould be peremptory to give no place to ungrounded, unwarranted ſurmiſes. They muſt on no account ſuffer their hearts to grow miſtruſtful of each other. All raſh, ill-built, haſty ſurmiſes, muſt be far from them. Otherwiſe love will go out at the ſame door, at which ſuſpicion came in. He or ſhe that has a ſuſpicious head, has not a truly loving heart. Such may be luſtful or fond; but an holy, virtuous, ſpiritual affection they cannot have. So long as they give way to evil ſurmiſings, there is no place for this. * And therefore of all domeſtic makebates, of all that breeds quarrel between married people, nothing in the world is more peſtilently effectual to this bad end than jealouſy. Having leavened the heart, it makes the ſpeech tart and ſharp, the countenance ſour, the whole behaviour diſtaſteful. No good words, no good actions, or gueſtures, or looks can proceed from a jealous heart. Jealouſy will make one ſuck miſchievous things out of his own fingers ends. Suffer not therefore this evil weed to grow up in the garden of matrimony. For no good herb will proſper by it; no praiſe-worthy thing will flouriſh. Let all then that are married, deteſt any thought of this kind that may ariſe.

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Let their hearts disdain to give the least credit, unless the proofs be more than manifest. Away then with this makebate jealousy, this quarreler suspicion, this breeder of brawls, this mother and nurse of contention, this underminer of love and of good husbandry, of all that should be profitable to an household. Away with it, I say, out of thy heart: chase it far from thy breast, from thy house. It is better to receive ten wrongs without suspecting, than to suspect one that is not received. Wherefore as thou wouldst stand for the good name of thy companion, against the tongue of a slanderer, so stand for it against the dreams of thy own heart, against thy own slanderous imagination. And if any person will suffer his lips to be so ill employed, as to become Satan's bellows, by blowing these coals betwixt you, by telling thee this or that, rebuke such a person, reject his words with detestation, flee his company, nor defile thy ears and heart, by giving gentle audience to a whisperer and talebearer. In a word, wouldst thou love or be loved? Wouldst thou live otherwise in marriage, than as in a prison or dungeon? Then strengthen thy heart against all suspicion, and rather be any thing than jealous.

7. Ye must be tender also of each other's reputation abroad. This requireth two things: First, that each labour to conceal the weaknesses of the other, so far as is possible, from all men. The husband must endeavour, that none may know

know of his wife's faults, but himself: and the wife must do her best to keep her husband's faults from the knowledge of every creature. On the contrary, to publish each others sins, is a monstrous treachery. To backbite an enemy is a sin: how much more to backbite ones yoke-fellow? Whose faults can a man cover if not his wife's, that is in effect, his own? Or who can be free from reproach, if one so near as his wife, deface his good name? 'Tis impossible but man and wife must sooner or later discover their weaknesses to one another. And for them to be playing the tell-tale against each other, what soul does not loath to think of it? If thou hast been so sinfully talkative before, now for shame lay thy hand upon thy mouth, that thou mayst no more incur the name of fool, by making thy tongue to spread abroad folly.

8. But besides this, you must faithfully keep each others secrets. A man may have occasion to acquaint his wife, with things which he would not reveal to others; so may a woman to acquaint her husband. Now if in such cases a wife find, that her husband has revealed what she intrusted with him alone; or he find, that she has revealed what he spoke to her in the confidence of love, this will breed such a distrust of the offending party, as will not easily be removed. Wherefore let husbands and wives always mind this: If he lay up any thing in her breast, let him find it safe there, as in a chest, which cannot be opened by

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any pick-lock. If she commit a thing to his safe keeping, let it be imprisoned in his bosom. Otherwise no man can chuse but be strange to one, whom experience has convinced of blabbing. And it is an infallible truth, that there is no comfortable living with one whom you cannot trust.

9. The last part of faithful helpfulness to each other, is that which concerns their estates. And to this end it is requisite, first, that all things be common between them, goods as well as persons: For if they make not a division in the greater, it is absurd to make it in the less. They should have one house and one purse: for they are one, and their estates should be one also. And having thus united their fortunes, let them, secondly, practise good husbandry therein. This implies three things, diligence in getting, prudence in saving, providence in foreseeing. These three, industry, frugality, and forecast, make up good husbandry. And if any of these are wanting, so much is wanting to the perfection of it; and so much also will be wanting, for their comfort and prosperity.

CHAP. IV.

Of the duties *of the married to their* family.

1. A Man and his wife, who before were members of other families, join together that they may become the roots of a new family: Wherein

Wherein by training up their ſervants and children, they provide plants for God's vineyard, the church. In this family the huſband is the head; the wife is the next, as ſubordinate to him. They are both to maintain and govern their family. Firſt, they muſt join in providing it with all neceſſaries, imitating herein the father of this great family, the world, who fills every creature with good things fit for it. But they muſt govern as well as maintain their houſhold; the man as God's immediate officer, the woman as an officer deputed by him, not equal, but ſubordinate: he, by the authority derived immediately from God, ſhe by authority derived from her huſband.

2. The firſt point, in order to the due government of their family, is to educate their children well; more eſpecially in their tender years. I cannot lay down a better method for this, than is laid down in a letter printed ſome years ſince; part of which is here ſubjoined.

* "According to your deſire, I have collected the principal rules I obſerved in educating my family. The children (ſhe had ten who came to man's eſtate, eight of whom were frequently at home together) were put into a regular method of living, in ſuch things as they were capable of, from their birth, as in dreſſing, undreſſing, changing their linen, &c. The firſt quarter commonly paſſes in ſleep. After that, they were, if poſſible, laid into their cradles awake, and rocked aſleep, and ſo they were kept rocking till it was time

time for them to awake. This was done to bring them to a regular courſe of ſleeping, which at firſt was three hours in the morning, and three in the afternoon: afterwards two hours till they needed none at all.

* "When they were turned a year old, they were taught to fear the rod, and cry ſoftly. By this means they eſcaped abundance of correction which otherwiſe they muſt have had, and that odious noiſe of the crying of children was rarely heard in the houſe.

* "As ſoon as they were grown pretty ſtrong, they were confined to three meals a day. They were never ſuffered to chuſe their meat, but always ate ſuch things as were provided for the family. Whatever they had, they were never permitted to eat of more than one thing. Drinking or eating between meals was never allowed, but in caſe of ſickneſs, which rarely happened.

* "At ſix they had their ſupper. At ſeven their maid waſhed them, and got them all to bed by eight. Then ſhe left them in their ſeveral rooms awake: for we allowed no ſuch thing, as ſitting by a child till it fell aſleep.

"They were ſo conſtantly uſed to eat and drink what was given them, that when any of them was ill, there was no difficulty in making them take the moſt unpleaſant medicine. This I mention, to ſhew a perſon may be taught to take any thing, be it ever ſo diſagreeable.

"In

* " In order to form the minds of children, the firſt thing to be done, is, to conquer their will. To inform their underſtanding is a work of time, and muſt proceed by ſlow degrees: but the ſubjecting the will is a thing which muſt be done at once; and the ſooner the better. For by our neglecting timely correction, they contract a ſtubbornneſs, which is hardly ever to be conquered, and never without uſing that ſeverity, which would be as painful to us as to the children. Therefore I call thoſe cruel parents, who paſs for kind and indulgent: who permit their children to contract habits, which they know muſt be afterwards broken.

" Whenever a child is corrected, it muſt be conquered. And when his will is totally ſubdued, then a great many childiſh follies and inadvertencies may be paſt by. Some ſhould be overlooked and taken no notice of, and others mildly reproved. But no wilful tranſgreſſion ſhould ever be forgiven, without chaſtiſement, leſs or more.

" I inſiſt upon conquering the wills of children betimes, becauſe this is the only foundation of a religious education, without which both precept and example will be ineffectual. But when this is throughly done, then a child is capable of being governed by the reaſon of its parent, till its own underſtanding comes to maturity, and the principles of religion have taken root.

* " I cannot yet diſmiſs this ſubject. As ſelf-will is the root of all ſin and miſery, ſo whatever

cheriſhes

cherishes this in children, ensures their after wretchedness and irreligion; and whatever checks and mortifies it, promotes their future happiness and piety. This is still more evident, if we consider, that religion is nothing else but the doing the will of God, not our own: and that self-will being the grand impediment to our temporal and eternal happiness, no indulgence of it can be trivial, no denial of it unprofitable. Heaven or hell depends on this alone. So that the parent who studies to subdue it in his children, works together with God in the saving a soul; the parent who indulges it, does the devil's work, makes religion impracticable, salvation unattainable, and does all that in him lies, to damn his child, soul and body for ever."

3. This advice, first, to conquer the wills of children, is exactly agreeable to the apostle's direction to parents, Eph. vi. 4. *Train them up,* (I do not say, *in the nurture and admonition of the* Lord; for I know not what that odd expression means, but) ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νουθεσίᾳ Κυρίου, *in the discipline and instruction of the* Lord. Ἐν παιδείᾳ, *in the discipline* first; then ἐν νουθεσίᾳ, in Christian knowledge; because they may be inured to discipline, before they are capable of *instruction.* * This therefore I cannot but earnestly repeat, break their wills betimes: begin this great work before they can run alone, before they can speak plain, perhaps before they can speak at all. Whatever pains it costs, conquer their stubbornness;

neſs: break the will, if you would not damn the child. I conjure you, not to neglect, not to delay this. Therefore, 1. Let a child, from a year old, be taught to fear the rod, and to cry ſoftly. It cannot be expreſt, how much pains this will ſave both to the parent and the child. In order to this, 2. Let him have nothing he cries for; abſolutely nothing, great or ſmall. Let this be an unvariable rule; elſe you undo all your own work. 3. At all events, from that age, make him do as he is bid, if you whip him ten times running to effect it. Let none perſuade you it is cruelty to do this: it is real cruelty, not to do it. If you ſpare the rod, you ſpoil the child; if you do not conquer, you ruin him. Break his will now, and his ſoul ſhall live, and he will probably bleſs you to all eternity.

4. * But we are by nature not only full of ſelf-will, but likewiſe of pride, atheiſm, anger, falſhood and idolatry. Now the end of education is to counteract and remove all the corruption of nature; of Chriſtian education in particular, termed by St *Paul, the diſcipline and inſtruction of the* Lord. Set yourſelves, therefore, ye Chriſtian parents, to the work. Indeed it is not a little one. In order to accompliſh it, you will need both the wiſdom and the power of God: in order to root up, inſtead of ſtrengthening, as moſt do, all theſe roots of bitterneſs. Self-will has been ſpoken of already. The next evil you are to oppoſe in children is pride. In order to

guard

guard againſt this, 1. Never commend them to their face, either for their goodneſs, ſenſe or beauty. It is deadly poiſon. It is the direct way to plunge their ſouls in everlaſting perdition. 2. Suffer no other to do it, if you can poſſibly prevent it: and if any ſhould commend them, in their hearing, regard not compliſance, or good-breeding ſo called, but check them immediately. 3. Lovingly ſhew them their faults, eſpecially their wrong tempers, as ſoon as ever their underſtanding dawns. 4. In particular, labour to convince them of atheiſm: ſhew them, that they are *without* God in *the world:* that they do not know God; that they do not love, delight in, or enjoy him, any more than do the beaſts that periſh. 5. Do not teach them revenge: never ſay, "Who hurts my child? Give me a blow for him." Do not encourage them in anger, by laughing at, or ſeeming pleaſed with their little froward tricks. Rather check them for the leaſt appearance of it, much more for an angry word or action. 6. Let property be inviolably maintained among your little ones. Let none of them dare to take the very leaſt thing, not an apple or a pin, without, much leſs, againſt the conſent of the owner. 7. Do not teach them lying. Never ſay, "It was not my child that did ſo." On the contrary, inure them to confeſs their faults, and to tell the truth at all hazards. 8. Begin early to guard them againſt idolatry, againſt the love of the world in all its branches.

branches. Do nothing to feed in them *the desire of the flesh*; that is, of the pleasures of sense. Keep them (on this account, as well as on account of health) to the plainest, simplest diet. If they do not want it as physic, let them taste no liquid till ten or twelve years old, but water or milk. Above all, let no tea come within their lips, no strong drink of any kind. If they never have it, they will never desire it. It is wholly *your* fault if they do. Do nothing to feed in them *the desire of the eye*. Let their dress also be plain and simple. Let them always (so far as your circumstances will allow) be clean, but never fine. Let them never wear any thing that is showey, any thing that is gay or glittering. Put nothing upon them that attracts the eye, either their own, or that of others. Give them nothing, nor suffer others to give them any thing that is purely ornamental. Dress your children just as you dress yourself, that when they are grown up, they may have nothing to unlearn. More full directions on these heads, and many others, you have in the "Instructions for Children," which I advise every parent to read again and again, and to put it in practice with all his power.

5. The government of your family in general respects matters of God, and matters of the world. Your first care must be, that the living God be duly worshipped by all in your house.

To

To this end, you must read the scriptures, call upon the name of God among them, and catechise them in the principles of religion, that none under your roof may be ignorant of the great truths of the gospel. To this end also you must see, that they sanctify the sabbath: you must carefully and constantly bring them to the public assemblies, and examine them afterwards, how they profit thereby. If this care be wanting, you will want the blessing of God on all your other cares. Wherefore, let man and wife be principally helpful to each other in this business. When the husband is present, let him read and pray with the family, and teach them the fear of the Lord. In his absence, let his wife do these duties, or at least take care to see them done. And let both of them provide and allow convenient time and leisure for the same: and let each quicken the slackness of the other, if either begin to grow weary. If he *is worse than an infidel*, who provideth not food and cloathing for his family, what is he that lets their souls go naked, for want of that which is both food and cloathing to them; I mean, instruction in the things that pertain to life and godliness? Herein, then, let all husbands and wives be of one mind in the Lord, using all good means to plant and water piety in the hearts of all that are under their care.

6. As to matters of the world, first, They must appoint their inferiors such works and services,

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as they are severally fit for, and then follow and look after them, that they may perform those services. Had not the Lord seen, that inferiors would need this, he would not have made this difference in the family. But God saw, that the best servants need this help, and therefore ordained governors; generally two, that the absence of the one might be supplied by the presence of the other. Secondly, You must mark the carriage of your inferiors, and see what disorders do, or are ready to break in, whether openly or secretly, that they may be either prevented or resisted speedily. Idleness, tatling, discord, and many more evils, are apt to steal even on good servants and children, which the Lord well knowing, made rulers in the house, to keep all in good order: and if this care be some trouble, yet the mischiefs which arise from the want of it are much more troublesome: whereas, if the eyes of the master and mistress be always open, much peace will follow in the house. Thirdly, You must join in admonishing, encouraging, reproving, and, if need be, correcting your inferiors. Both must discountenance what is evil, and encourage what is good. And in so doing you must take care to maintain each other's authority to the full. If one encourage, the other must not oppose; if one reprove, the other must not defend. If he see cause to correct the children, she must not grow angry or hinder: neither, when she would correct, must he save them out of her hands. Nay,

Nay, suppose either should exceed, correcting either without cause, or above measure, the other must not find fault, in hearing of the inferiors; but they must debate the matter between themselves, and keep their disagreements from appearing in the family. So therefore join hands, that your dissention may not blast the fruit of all your endeavours. So shall you preserve your authority, encrease your love to each other, and procure amendment in your inferiors.

CHAP. V.

Of a Man's *keeping his* Authority.

1. IT is the duty of an husband, to govern his wife, and to maintain her. The former implies, that he keep his authority, and that he use it. And, first, every man is bound to keep himself in that place wherein his Maker hath set him, and to hold fast that precedency which God hath assigned him. The Lord hath intitled him *your head*, and he may not take a lower place. The contempt redounds upon God, which a man takes upon himself, by making his wife his master. But perhaps some will say, "All this is reasonable, if it were practicable. But there are some wives so proud, headstrong, and stubborn, that their husbands cannot govern them." I answer, most men blame their wives,

when the real fault is in themſelves. Man cannot hinder a violent woman from aſſaulting his authority, but he may from winning it: not indeed by violence, but by ſkill; not by main force, but by a ſteddy and wiſe proceeding. And, firſt, let him endeavour to exceed his wife in goodneſs as he does in place. Let him walk uprightly and religiouſly in his family, and give a good example to all in the houſe. Then any reaſonable woman will give him the better place, whom ſhe ſees to be the better perſon. Take pains then to make thyſelf good, and that is the moſt compendious way to make thyſelf reverenced.

2. This in general. But in particular, ſhun thoſe evils, that make a man ſeem vile in the eyes of thoſe that are round about him. The firſt of theſe is bitterneſs: ſharp, tart carriage, reviling, paſſionate, provoking language, are fitly ſo called; being as offenſive to the mind, as gall and worm-wood to the palate. This bitterneſs ſhews folly, and works hatred, and therefore muſt needs be a great underminer of authority. For wherever want of wiſdom is, there will enſue want of reverence. He that would retain his pre-eminence, muſt, ſecondly, avoid unthriftineſs, another great enemy to reverence. Drunkenneſs, gaming, and ill company, are the three parts of unthriftineſs. And whoever gives way to any of theſe, muſt expect to be deſpiſed. Thirdly, lightneſs muſt be avoided

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by husbands, all foolish, childish behaviour, that wears no stamp of gravity or discretion, but favours of a kind of boyishness. If the husband puts a fool's coat upon his back, can he blame his wife for laughing at him? Cast therefore all those base evils from you, and strive for holiness and gravity of conversation, that your superiority, supported by such pillars, may stand upright and unshaken.

3. But how is a man to use this authority, so that it may answer the end for which it is given? The end of it is, *That he may present her to* God, *holy and without blemish*; that he may so govern her, as to weaken every corruption, and strengthen every grace in her soul. In order to do this, he must temper the exercise of his authority, by justice, wisdom and mildness. Justice is the life and soul of government, without which it is no better than a dead carcase: wisdom is the eye of government, without which it is like a strong man stark blind. Mildness is the health and good constitution of government: and when these are all joined together, then the husband is, as it were, God in the family, a resemblance of his sovereignty and goodness.

4. Justice is to be practised in directing and recompensing. For the first, a man must not so abuse his authority, as to enjoin any thing sinful: what God commands, he must not forbid; what God forbids, he must not command. Let no husband forget, that the Lord in heaven,

and the magiſtrate on earth, are above him. He and his wife are equally ſubject to theſe. Therefore let him never ſet his private authority againſt theirs, nor make his wife undutiful to either of theſe, by a falſe claim of duty to himſelf. For inſtance: let no huſband command his wife to lie for his advantage, to break the ſabbath for his gain; to partake of his fraud, or ſin of any kind. Neither let any man forbid his wife to pray unto God, to attend his word and ſacraments; to uſe any of the means which God hath made the ordinary channels of his grace. See then, all ye huſbands that your directions to your wives agree with the laws of God. Otherwiſe to diſobey you is the better obedience, and to reject your evil directions, is not to deny ſubjection to your perſons but to your ſins, yea to the devil himſelf, who rules in you.

5. But this rule of juſtice muſt extend a little farther. The huſband muſt not urge his authority, not only in things unlawful, but even in thoſe that *ſeem* unlawful to his wife's miſtaken conſcience. He ought not to force her to what ſhe *thinks* a ſin. Conſcience is God's immediate officer, and tho' it is miſtaken, muſt be obeyed, 'till it be better informed. Wherefore, when a woman thro' weakneſs fancies a thing indifferent to be ſinful, a man muſt not compel her to act againſt her conſcience, but with pity and gentleneſs try to remove that miſtake. "But what if ſhe pretend conſcience, when it is but willfulneſs?"

ness?" Then he must wait awhile, and if persuasions avail not, at length use his authority, and enjoin her to change her obstinacy into subjection. "But how shall I know, whether she be scrupulous or stubborn?" I answer, scruple of conscience is grounded on the word of God, on some text which carries an appearance at least of condemning the thing in question. But obstinacy is backed with no part of God's word. Therefore, if a woman produce some scripture, tho' perhaps misinterpreted, for her scruple, she must be tenderly dealt with. But if she plead conscience, without God's word, it is probably a mere pretence. Again, it may be a mistaken conscience, when things indifferent are deemed either necessary or sinful. But if conscience be pleaded against doing what God hath plainly commanded, this is willfulness in error, not weakness of conscience.

9. Justice is likewise to be exercised in requiting either the bad or good carriage of the wife. Bad behaviour may be requited with reproof or correction. But be sure, not to reprove without a fault. Find not a fault where no fault is, for fear of making one where there was none. And observe; a fault reformed is to be accounted no fault. Therefore it must never be mentioned more. And when a real fault requires punishment, still the husband must come exceeding slowly to it, and be very seldom in it, never until he is compelled, because all other

means are ineffectual. For a man to look and behave cooly towards his wife, to withdraw the testimonies of his love, to cease to trust and to speak familiarly and chearfully to her, these things I call punishments. And all things of this kind must be more or less sharp, as the fault is greater or less, being suited, not to the passion or loss, or hurt of the reprover, but to the offence of the reproved. On the other hand, rewards and commendations should be proportioned to the nature and degree of her good behaviour: the husband being careful to feed her virtues, nourish her obedience, and confirm all her amiable qualities.

7. The next virtue of the husband is wisdom, which gives rules for the right ordering his authority. It is a main part of this wisdom, to conform the use of his authority to the disposition of his wife. There is a great difference in tempers: some are more stiff, some more pliant; some are easy to be ruled, some the contrary. Some require more sharpness; others will be better wrought upon by gentleness; and wisdom teaches to frame all commands, reproofs, rewards, according to the condition of the person. A soft, tender woman must be dealt with tenderly; a rough, high-spirited one, with more sternness and severity. And herein an husband must not follow his own inclinations, but bow himself to the temper of his wife. As she is more apt to grieve or rage, to be dejected or careless, so ought

ought a man to ſhape his words and behaviour, that he may moſt heal and leaſt provoke thoſe paſſions to which ſhe is moſt liable. St. *Peter* points all men to this part of diſcretion, when he terms women, *the weaker veſſel*; meaning, ſubject to more natural infirmities than the man. So much the more ſhould the huſband ſhew himſelf a man of knowledge toward her. Our Saviour's government may be our example. He well conſiders the particular nature of all his members, ſees the tempers and infirmities of each, and deals with them accordingly. And his wiſdom appears in mixing a fit cup of conſolation or affliction for every ſoul. Every huſband muſt carefully imitate this: for if ſome women were reproved ſo frequently and ſo ſharply as others; they would be quite diſheartened: and if ſome were to receive ſo great kindneſs and ſuch commendations as others need, they would be utterly deſtroyed by pride. Now the art of government muſt moderate all theſe things, according to the nature of the governed. And this art the giver of wiſdom will not deny, to them that earneſtly crave it at his hands.

8. Another part of wiſdom is, to chuſe a fit time and place for every act of authority. Two rules may be obſerved with regard to time, particularly in reproving, that being a thing wherein moſt caution ſhould be uſed, becauſe it is moſt apt to be taken ill, and becauſe if it ſpeed well, it does much good, if not, it does much hurt.

But in all other parts of government, the ſame rules are ſo needful, that much miſchief will grow by not obſerving them. Now, as in this caſe there are two perſons concerned, ſo a time of reproving or commanding muſt be choſen, ſuitable to both. It muſt be then uſed, when he is fit to uſe it well, and ſhe to take it well. Firſt then, when a man himſelf is quiet, in tune, and free from perturbation, then probably he will reprove or command well. But when anger boils within, let him forbear exerciſing any part of his authority, till he recover his due temper. Authority cannot be well managed, but by the hand of wiſdom. Therefore undertake not to exerciſe it, at a time when wiſdom is baniſhed. Go not about ſuch a work, but when thou art thyſelf, when thy mind is ſettled, thy judgment clear. Then ſhew thy wife her duty, then tell her of her faults; elſe ſhe will never mend her faults or ſee her duty. Chuſe, ſecondly, the time wherein ſhe is moſt capable of receiving information or reproof: when ſhe is chearfully quiet, well-pleaſed, free from exceſſive grief, anger, pain, ſickneſs, which often untunes the ſoul, then is a good time to adviſe or tell her of a fault. Elſe her paſſions will make her as unable to take any thing well, as his will make him unable to do it well.

[illegible]e, commendations or eaſy com- [illegible] given before others. But for re- [illegible] moſt ſecret place is generally the moſt convenient.

convenient. Or if you would have her do or forbear any thing, which you think will be displeasing to her to hear, tell your mind in private, and then persuade where you may freely speak all that is fit to be spoken. "But what if women offend in public, before servants and children, and strangers?" I answer, in this case, a man may shew his dislike, that others may not be hurt by the bad example. But he should delay the proper, home reproof, 'till his wife and he be together alone.

10. Next to wisdom is mildness, a very necessary virtue in this society. No woman can endure her husband's government with comfort, if gentleness do not temper it. The Lord Jesus is the most gentle and meek governor in the world: and when he requireth us to take his yoke upon us, he commends himself as meek and lowly, his *yoke* as *easy* and his *burden* as *light*. This is the best precedent for husbands to follow, the most worthy copy for them to write after. The apostle teaches us to be gentle, not only to the good, but also to them that are froward. Surely then the husband must be gentle toward his wife, tho' she be of a froward disposition. Yea, we are commanded to shew all meekness to all men: much more should each man shew it to his wife. And that in both the parts of authority, in directing and recompensing.

11. As to the former, the husband should beware of extending the use of his commanding

power too far. Let him use it as seldom, and as little as possible. It may suffice him to know, that God has given him the right of directing, in every thing which is not sinful. But in the exercise of it, he must shew himself of a kind and free nature, not rigorously taking upon him, to command all he may, but willingly gratifying his wife, in some, in many, in most things, that she may with the more chearfulness, be subject to him in others. Let him also shew mildness, in forbearing hard commandments, as much as possibly he can. Beware of crossing your wife, without cause, and forcing her to things against her natural disposition. Enjoin nothing of this kind, unless there be an absolute necessity. And as to the manner of commanding, let nothing be imperiously prescribed, but with sweet kindness and familiar requests. Indeed, if the wife will try for mastery, and strive to cast off the yoke of obedience, then it is needful for the husband, with good words, to stand for his authority, even somewhat stifly and peremptorily professing, that he will have his will in things lawful. But this course should be rarely taken, and that only in matters of importance. In other cases it is better mildly to wish this or that, than haughtily to enjoin it.

12. But mildness is never so needful as in reproving, both with regard to the matter and the manner of it. For the matter; find not fault with every feible; chide not for every infirmity.

ty. What is not of a grofs nature, or done wilfully, may be paſſed over either with none, or half a word. The love which paſſes by weakneſſes is neceſſary toward ſtrangers; much more with thoſe who are ſo nearly united. * Be not therefore extreme or rigorous, but be affected toward thy wife, as a tender mother toward her child. Pray to God againſt all her faults; ſee and commend all her virtues: but petty wants and little ordinary weakneſſes, ſeldom take notice of, or reprove. Let her perceive, that thou doſt, but wilt not know them. And thy unwillingneſs to ſee and reprove, will make her, if ſhe has any ſpark of generoſity, more willing to ſee and reform. But an ever-lowering and ever-chiding huſband will make his wife worſe than ſhe would otherwiſe be. * For the manner of reproving, even when it is moſt needful, it ſhould be very gentle. The words and geſtures uſed to preſs the fault, ſhould be mild and amiable, breathing out love and pity at once. No patient is ſo deſirous of health, that he will drink a potion ſcalding hot. So it is with reproof: if it, as it were, ſcald the ear with bitter upbraiding, with railing words, and a fiery look, it will never gain paſſage to the heart. Compaſſion, kindneſs, declaring your ſorrow for her fault, deſire of her good, and care for her amendment; theſe incline the will to accept of an admonition, and help the effect of it. I am not againſt the wholeſome earneſtneſs of reproving: but this may be

without bitterneſs or fierceneſs. An admonition is then healthfully ſharp and earneſt, when a man with much plainneſs of ſpeech and ſtrength of reaſon lays open the greatneſs and danger of the ſin, and vehemently enforces them on the ſinner's conſcience: but compaſſionately ſtill, with a declaration of more ſorrow than anger, of more grief for her fault and danger, than diſpleaſure againſt her perſon.

CHAP VI.

Of the Wife's *peculiar* Duties.

1. THE ſpecial duties of a wife may be reduced to two heads, To know herſelf the inferior, and to behave as ſuch. Firſt, She muſt know herſelf the inferior; ſhe muſt be thoroughly convinced, that ſhe is not her huſband's equal, without which there can be no content, either in her heart, or in her houſe. Where the woman counts herſelf equal with her huſband, (much more, if ſhe count herſelf better) the root of all good carriage is withered, the fountain thereof dried up. Whoever therefore would be a good wife, let this ſink into her inmoſt ſoul, "My huſband is my ſuperior, my better: he has the right to rule over me. God has given it him, and I will not ſtrive againſt God. He is my ſuperior, my better." Unleſs ſhe has learnt this leſſon perfectly, unleſs ſhe has

has it at her fingers ends, if her very heart does not thoroughly agree thereto, there will be nothing between them but wrangling, repining, ſtriving: ſo that their life will be little elſe than a continual battle, a trying for maſteries. Let us grant, you have more wit and underſtanding than him, more readineſs of ſpeech, more ſkill in buſineſs. Yet conſider; your ſervant may exceed you in all theſe, as much as you do him. And yet you would be loath that your ſervant ſhould claim an equality either with him or you. Know then, a man may be ſuperior in place to him, who is his ſuperior in gifts: and know likewiſe, thou doſt abuſe the gifts of God, if thence thou infringeſt thy huſband's ſuperiority. Wherefore, with all thy underſtanding, underſtand this, that God has made him thy governor and ruler, and thee his inferior, to be ruled by him, and to ſubmit to him in all things. Though he be of meaner birth and ſmaller capacity, tho' he had no wealth or name before thou didſt marry him, yet from that hour the caſe is changed, and he is no longer beneath thee, but above thee. Set it down therefore as a concluſion never to be called in queſtion. "My huſband is my ſuperior."

2. The wife knowing herſelf the inferior, muſt, ſecondly, behave as ſuch, by reverence and ſubjection to her huſband. Firſt, By reverence. She owes this to her huſband, as much as the children or ſervants do to her: yea, as they do

to

to him; only hers is sweetened with more love and familiarity. She is no less bound to *reverence her husband*, than are the rest of the family. This alone is the difference; she may be more familiar, not more rude, as being more dear, not less subject than they.

3. And this reverence must be both inward and outward. First, she must have an inward, dutiful respect for her husband. She must regard him as God's deputy, not looking to his person but his place, not thinking so much, what he is, as whose officer. So the apostle, *Let the wife see that she reverence her husband.* Of all things, let her not fail in this. He here prescribes such a loving, not slavish, fear, as stands with the closest union of heart. And from this fear, she abhors and shuns, as the greatest evil which can befal her, next to the breaking the commandments of God, to displease or offend her husband. We stand in due awe of God, when we loath the breach of his commandments, as the greatest of all evils. And the wife duly stands in awe of her husband, when next to that evil, she shuns the disobeying or grieving him, who is above her, next to God. I know many woman care as little for their husbands, as their husbands do for them. But if thou wilt ever please God, take much pains with thy heart, to make it stand in awe of thy husband. As a wife grows in this, so may she look to get the better of all her other infirmities: as she is careless herein, so shall she be pestered

peſtered with various other evils. "But how ſhall ſhe bring her heart to this?" By looking thro' her huſband to God the author of marriage, and putting herſelf often in mind, not of his deſerts, but of God's ordinance. The huſband is to the wife *the image and glory of* God: the power that is given to him is God's originally, and his by God's appointment. Look not therefore on the qualities of thy huſband, but upon his place. If thou deſpiſeſt him, the contempt redounds upon God, who hath ordained him to be thy head. If therefore thy heart be ſeaſoned with the fear of God, thou wilt fear thy huſband alſo.

4. And this inward will produce outward reverence, both in her words and actions. Her words are either to himſelf, of him behind his back, or to others before him. And, 1. Her words to himſelf ſhould neither be ſharp, ſullen, paſſionate, not rude, careleſs or contemptuous: ſuch as ſhew neither anger, nor neglect, but all lowlineſs and quietneſs of affection. What kind of words would you diſlike from a ſervant or child? Thoſe muſt you not give your huſband. For the ſame duty of fear is in the ſame words, and with the ſame plainneſs enjoined to thee that is to them. Indeed a wife, as I obſerved before, may be more familiar: yet there is an exceſs of familiarity which is blame-worthy. Why ſhould a woman be ſo over-bold as to call her huſband, *Tom*, *Dick*, *Ned*? Could ſhe ſpeak otherwiſe to her

her child or ſervant? Certainly thoſe ſpeeches of hers which are moſt familiar ſhould ſtill have a print of reverence upon them.

5. Her words alſo to others in his preſence ſhould be ſuch as witneſs a due reverence to him: In his company ſhe ſhould be more cautious of her behaviour to any, than otherwiſe ſhe need to be. Her words to children and ſervants in his ſight, ought not to be loud or ſnappiſh. If ſhe perceive a fault in them, ſhe ſhould remember her better ſtands by, and therefore not ſpeak, but upon neceſſity, and then utter the reproof in a more ſtill and mild manner, than ſhe might have done in his abſence. You allow not your children or ſervants to be loud before you. And will you be ſo before your huſband!

6. A wife's words likewiſe concerning her huſband behind his back, ſhould be dutiful and reſpectful. She muſt not talk of him with a kind of careleſſneſs, much leſs with reproachful terms. Hence the apoſtle recommends the example of *Sarah:* who when ſhe but thought of her huſband, in the abſence of all company, (*Gen.* xviii. 12.) reverently intitled him, *My Lord.* Who would bear a child ſpeaking againſt his father behind his back? And ſhall it be thought ſufferable in a wife? He that allows not an evil thought of the prince, will not allow evil ſpeeches of the huſband.

7. Yea, the very geſtures and countenance of a wife, as well as her words, ſhould be mixt with reverence.

reverence. Both good and bad tempers have more ways of uttering themſelves than by the tongue. *Solomon* ſpeaks of an *eye that deſpiſeth his mother:* ſo the eye of a wife may be a deſpiſing eye and her geſtures may proclaim contempt, tho' her tongue be altogether ſilent. But rude and contemptuous behaviour are no leſs uncomely than diſreſpectful words. Wherefore, if you condemn theſe in your children toward yourſelf, allow them not in yourſelf toward your huſband.

8. The ſecond duty, ſubjection, implies obedience to his commands, and ſubmiſſion to his reproofs. The former is expreſly enjoined in thoſe words, *Let the wife be ſubject to her huſband in all things.* And indeed, if ſhe refuſe it to him, how can ſhe require it of the children and ſervants? For it is due to her only as his deputy, and a ſubſtitute under him. "But how far muſt ſhe be ſubject to him?" The apoſtle tells us, *In all things, in the* Lord. Obedience, you ſee, muſt be univerſal: only ſo that it may be *in the* Lord. In every thing wherein obedience to him would not prove rebellion againſt her Maker, ſhe is bound to obey, without any farther queſtion. An *Engliſh* ſubject is not bound to obey the King in any thing but what ſome law enjoins. His will is no law, neither does it bind the conſcience of his ſubject. But the huſband's will is a law to his wife, and binds her conſcience in all things indifferent. Nor does even this ſuffice, unleſs

ſhe

ſhe obey readily, quietly, chearfully, without brawling, contending, fourneſs.

9. The latter, ſubmiſſion to his reproofs, is alſo plainly required in theſe words, *As the church is ſubject to* Chriſt, *ſo muſt the wives to their own huſbands in every thing.* Now, bearing his reproofs is doubtleſs a neceſſary part of the church's ſubjection to Chriſt. Of conſequence it is a neceſſary part of the wife's ſubjection to her huſband.

CHAP. VII.

Some Application *of the Whole.*

1. * AND firſt, this yields a good inſtruction to young, unmarried people; not to ruſh unadviſedly into this ſtate. A thing of ſo difficult a nature, ſhould not be haſtily undertaken. If they get not firſt their hearts full of grace, and their heads full of wiſdom, they will find their hands full of work, an houſe full of trouble, and a life full of woe. Doſt thou deſire to be married? Unleſs thou wouldſt meet with gall inſtead of honey, ſee what wiſdom, what patience, what grace fit to govern, or fit to obey, thou findeſt in thyſelf. Get theſe againſt thou comeſt to uſe them, or marriage will yield thee ſmall contentment. Vain youths will marry, before they have any power to practiſe, any underſtanding to know their duties. But he that

leaps

leaps over a broad ditch with a ſhort ſtaff, will fall into the midſt: and he that enters into marriage without great grace, ſhall fall into diſquietude and vexation. Let unmarried people think of this, and be wiſe before pain teaches them wiſdom.

2. Secondly, I adviſe all married perſons to be well acquainted with theſe duties, and to mark their own failings therein. Let the wife know her's, the huſband his, and both, the common duties. I deſire they would each obſerve their own, and not each the other's failings. Indeed it may be feared, many will be the worſe for what has been ſaid, becauſe they heard amiſs. The huſband may perhaps ring his wife a peal concerning her duty, and tell her, how her faults were ript up; and yet never conſider his own. The wife may tell him of his faults, when ſhe has little or nothing to ſay of herſelf. Thus both will be worſe, while they ſeek to upbraid each other, and not each to amend one. Unwiſe man! Unwiſe woman! Why haſt thou not the greateſt care, to ſave thy own ſoul? Couldſt thou mark what was good for another's diſeaſe, and not what was good for thy own? Brethren, ſiſters, let this be altered in us. If thou be an huſband, have more care to know that, for which thy own ſoul muſt anſwer, than what lies to the account of another. So thou that art a wife; and woe to that man or woman, who ſees not more failings in him or herſelf than in the yoke-fellow. If thy

heart

heart were right, thy own ſins would be more grievous, and thy yoke-fellows leſs. Learn, therefore, to paſs by their failings more eaſily, and be more cenſorious toward thy own. Learn to judge thyſelf. *He never yet learned to work well at any work, that would caſt his eyes more upon his neighbour's fingers, than upon his own. But oh! how common is this? Every man would be a good huſband, if his wife, were not ſo bad! And ſhe would be a good wife, if her huſband were tolerable. All the accuſations, all the judgings are darted at each other: but what folly is this? Idle man or woman, it is not the requiring duty from another, but the performing what belongs to thyſelf, that will make thee a Chriſtian; that will comfort thee in temptation, rejoice thee in death, and ſtand for thee in judgment.

3. In a word. Know thy own duty, mark thy own failings, and thou wilt not quarrel with thy yoke-fellow. There is no better means of peace, than for every one to learn his own work, and labour to mend his own faults. Have you then both been to blame? Repent both, and ſtrain not courteſy which ſhall begin. Haſt thou been a fooliſh, paſſionate, or an unkind huſband? Not regarding thy wife's good? Cry not, "She has been thus and thus;" but repent of thy own ſin. Seriouſly confeſs it to God. Beſeech him to make thee a better huſband, that ſhe may be a better wife. Haſt thou been a brawling, diſobedient, or diſcontented wife? Aſk thy heart

before

before God, and diſſemble not. If ſo, clamour not againſt thy huſband, exclaim not againſt his paſſion or unkindneſs; but condemn thyſelf, and call upon God, to make thee reverence and obey thy huſband, as a commander under him. Intreat him to make thee a better wife, that he may be a better huſband. Let each mend one, I mean himſelf, and contention will ceaſe. Pray each for yourſelf firſt, then for the other: labour to ſee wherein you yourſelf have offended: and be not ſkilful to caſt the fault upon another, but to caſt it out of yourſelf. So ſhall your loves be ſure, your lives comfortable, your deaths happy, and your memories bleſſed for ever.

4. Before I conclude, it may not be improper to ſum up the duty of married perſons, as parents, and as maſters. Their duty as parents reſpects either the temporal or the ſpiritual good of their children. With regard to the former, you owe them protection and proviſion of neceſſaries, according to that rank and degree, wherein the wiſdom of God has placed you. You are carefully to protect your children, from all the evils and dangers, to which infancy, childhood and youth are expoſed. You are alſo to nouriſh and ſuſtain them; not only to provide for them for the preſent, but to take care for their future ſubſiſtence. If you have not a patrimony to leave them, it behoves you to leave them an art or calling, whereby thro' diligence, with the bleſſing of God, they may procure food

food convenient for them. * In the choice of this calling, you ſhould chiefly have an eye to their general Chriſtian calling, and conſider not ſo much what will conduce moſt to their temporal profit or honour, as what will moſt effectually advance their ſpiritual and eternal intereſt. This is a weighty point: it were well if all parents would deeply lay it to heart. It ſhould next be conſidered, whether the calling propoſed be ſuitable to their genius and inclination: which are to be conſulted on this head, only not as much as their eternal welfare.

5. With regard to their ſpiritual good, your firſt labour of love is, to preſent them to God in baptiſm. You are then to inure them to good, to inſtruct and admoniſh them, to educate them in the knowledge and fear of God, to ſeaſon their minds as early as poſſible with the fundamental truths of religion, and in ſuch a manner as is beſt ſuited to their capacity, to train them up in all holineſs. Every inſtruction ſhould be ſeconded by example. Let them continually ſee, as well as hear, how they ought to walk acceptably, and to pleaſe God. Be peculiarly careful to ſet before your children the copies and patterns of the virtues which you teach. And let them neither ſee nor hear any thing from you, which you would not deſire to have copied by them. Even an Heathen, and none of the moſt virtuous, could ſay,

Maxima

Maxima debetur pueris reverentia.

We ought to reverence and ſtand in awe of children that nothing may be ſpoken or done in their ſight, which may taint their tender minds. They are prone to imitate any; but more eſpecially thoſe who are ſo nearly related to them. Which undoubtedly they will be moſt ready to do, when example ſtrikes in with their natural propenſity to evil.

6. If neither good examples nor inſtructions will prevail, then correction becomes a duty. And this ſhould firſt be given in words, before you proceed to ſeverer methods: yet not in railing, or foul or bitter language, but in calm and ſober reproof. If that fail too, then uſe the rod. But whenever this correction is given, let it be with all the expreſſions of love and concern, which the nature of the thing will admit. Let it be timely, before ill habits are contracted, at leaſt, before they have time to take root. And let it be moderate, not exceeding the quality of the fault, or the tenderneſs of the child. Immoderate, or ill-natured and paſſionate correction, is ſo far from profiting children, that it very frequently frets and ſharpens their ſpirits, and makes them more ſtubborn and untractable. If they are of a ſofter temper, it frights and d ſpirits them. This is alſo the natural effect, of a ſour, harſh, unkind behaviour. Hence thoſe ſolemn cautions of the apoſtle, *Fathers, provoke not your children*

children to wrath, (Eph. vi. 4.) Avoid whatever tends thereto. Uſe no demeanor, no actions or words, or way of ſpeaking, which has ſuch a tendency. And again, *Fathers provoke not your children to anger, leſt they be diſcouraged*, Col. iii. 21. It is a different word from that uſed in the former text, Μὴ ἐρεθίζετε Do not purpoſely fret or teize them: leſt you ſhould diſhearten them too much, leſt you ſhould deſtroy their courage and vigour of mind, and make them of a faint, fearful, daſtardly ſpirit. The direction doubtleſs belongs to both the parents, but is more immediately addreſt to *fathers*, as they are generally of rougher and harſher ſpirits than the mothers, and not ſo much reſtrained by natural fondneſs. Laſtly, correction muſt not be given in anger: if it be, it will loſe its effect on the child, who will think he is corrected, not becauſe he has done a fault, but becauſe the parent is angry.

7. Theſe directions chiefly relate to young children. But even after they are grown up, you are ſtill engaged, to watch over their ſouls, to obſerve how they practiſe the precepts, which have been inculcated upon them from time to time, and to exhort, encourage, and reprove them accordingly. You are alſo to bleſs them, firſt by your prayers. Parents are under a peculiar obligation, by daily and earneſt prayer to commend their children to God's protection and bleſſing. You are, ſecondly, to bleſs them by your

your piety. See that you be such persons in all holiness of conversation, that from you the blessing of God may descend upon your posterity.

8. As masters, you are, 1. To be just to your servants, whether apprentices, journeymen, or household servants, in faithfully and exactly performing the conditions on which they engaged to serve you: particularly with regard to food, and the other necessaries or conveniences of life. You are, 2. To admonish and reprove them for their faults, more especially faults against God. But let this be done with all tenderness and mildness; *forbearing* not only bitter and opprobious language, but even *threatening, knowing that your master is in heaven, and that there is no respect of persons with him.* You are, 3. To set a good example to your servants; otherwise reproving will be but lost labour. It is your duty, 4. To provide them with all means of necessary instruction, and to allow them sufficient time to worship God, in private as well as in public. You are, 5. To beware that you give them only reasonable and moderate commands, that you do not make their service toilsome to them, by laying on them greater burdens than they can bear, or greater than you would impose, or they would bear, if they were not of the household of faith. Lastly, You are to encourage them in well-doing, by using them with that kindness, which their faithfulness, diligence, and piety deserve: in all your dealings with them remembring, you are

to give an account to *your maſter* of the uſage of your meaneſt ſervant.

Directions *to* Children.

1. CHILDREN, ſays the apoſtle writing to the *Epheſians*, (chap. vi. ver. 1.) *Obey your parents in the* Lord. To which he adds, *Honour thy father and mother, which is the firſt commandment with promiſe*, (with a particular promiſe annexed; for the promiſe annexed to the ſecond commandment, does not belong to the keeping that command in particular, but the whole law :) *that it may be well with thee, and thou mayſt live long upon the earth.* And this promiſe is by no means to be confined to the time of the Jewiſh diſpenſation. On the contrary, there are not wanting many inſtances, even in later times, of perſons eminently dutiful to their parents, who have been rewarded with eminent health and proſperity. Tho' ſtill it is acknowledged, that this promiſe, as moſt others, may be underſtood under the Chriſtian diſpenſation, in a ſpiritual and more exalted ſenſe.

2. But how are children to *honour their fathers and mothers?* Firſt, by reverencing them. This is an unqueſtionable duty, manifeſtly contained in the very term *honour*. And this inward reverence is to appear, in the whole outward behaviour. It is to be expreſſed both in their

their ſpeeches and geſtures, in their words and actions. Their ſpeech ſhould always teſtify *honour*, giving them the moſt reſpectful titles which their condition will bear. Likewiſe (unleſs on ſome peculiar occaſions) your words before them ſhould be few. For talkativeneſs before any perſon, has the appearance of diſreſpect. You ſhould alſo carry yourſelf with all lowlineſs and modeſty, while in the preſence of your parents: ſo that your whole carriage may be the natural expreſſion of the reſpect lodged in your hearts.

3. This reverence is not to be with-held, on account of either their ſuppoſed or real infirmities. For be the faults of the parents ever ſo great, this gives the children no authority to deſpiſe them: ſeeing whatever their tempers or their behaviour be, they are your parents ſtill. Neither are you to take any ſtep which might cauſe others to deſpiſe them. You cannot therefore mention their faults to others, without bringing guilt upon your own ſoul. You cannot mention them behind their back, and be guiltleſs. It is your part to conceal all their faults and infirmities, to the uttermoſt of your power. Be not like *Ham*, who bewrayed his father's nakedneſs, and was curſed of God to his lateſt poſterity. Rather imitate the piety of *Japhet* and *Shem:* cover with all care whatever you diſapprove of in a parent. Hide it from every

one elſe, and, if it were poſſible, even from yourſelf.

4. A ſecond duty which children owe to their parents is love. We are to bear them a deep, real kindneſs, an earneſt, tender good-will, heartily deſiring all manner of good to them, and abhorring to ſpeak or do any thing, which might give them uneaſineſs. This will appear no more than common gratitude, if we remember, what our parents have done for us. That they were the inſtruments not only of bringing us into the world, but alſo of ſuſtaining us after: and certainly they that weigh the cares and fears which attend the bringing up of a child, will judge the love of the child to be but a moderate return for them. This love is to be expreſt ſeveral ways. Firſt, in all kindneſs of behaviour, carrying ourſelves, not barely with awe and reſpect, but with tenderneſs and affection. It is to be expreſt, ſecondly, in praying for them. The debt which a child owes to a parent, is ſo inconceivably great, that he can never hope, fully to diſcharge it himſelf. He is therefore to ſeek the aſſiſtance of God, and continually to beg him that has all power in heaven and earth, to return whatever good his parents have done him, ſeven-fold into their own boſom.

5. A third duty which children owe to their parents is obedience. As this is plainly implied in the fifth commandment, ſo it is expreſly enjoined by the apoſtle: *Children, obey your parents*

rents in the Lord. (Eph. vi. 1.) And again, *Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well-pleasing to the* Lord. (Col. iii. 20.) We owe them obedience *in all things*, unless where their commands are contrary to the commands of God. In every thing of an indifferent nature, whatever they enjoin, we are to do. The case is the same with regard to the authority of parents over their children, as with regard to that of husbands over their wives. The will of your parent is a law to you, as soon as it is signified to you. You are to comply with it immediately, not for wrath, not only to avoid this, but also for conscience sake. Such is the will of God concerning you: so high is the authority which he hath entrusted them with.

6. And yet we are to obey them only *in the* Lord: only so far as consists with his authority over us. Therefore, if any of their commands are contrary to the commands of God, in that case our duty to God must be preferred. If therefore any parent should be so wicked as to require his child to steal, to lie, or to do any thing unlawful, the child offends not against his duty, tho' he disobey that command. Nay, he must disobey; otherwise he offends against an higher duty, even that which every child of man owes to his Father which is in heaven. Yet when it is necessary to refuse obedience, it should be done in so modest and respectful a manner, that it may plainly appear, not stubbornness but

conſcience is the ground of that refuſal. Let this appear likewiſe by your ready and chearful compliance with all their lawful commands: as well knowing, that wherever the command of a parent is not contrary to any command of God, there the child is in conſcience bound to obey, whether in a weightier or lighter matter.

7. * Nothing therefore but the unlawfulneſs of their command, can excuſe the diſobeying our parents. If any inſtance of diſobedience is more inexcuſable than others, it is the marrying againſt, or even without their conſent. Indeed, parents have ſo peculiar a right to their children, that to give themſelves away without their allowance, is not only an high act of diſobedience, but of flagrant injuſtice. And hence we ſee, that among God's antient people, if a young woman had even *made a vow*, ſhe was not ſuffered to perform it, without the conſent of the parent, (*Numb.* xxx. 5.) Indeed children ought to have a negative voice, and not be compelled to marry without their own conſent. But if they marry without the conſent of their parents, let them expect no bleſſing from God.

8. A fourth duty which children owe to their parents, is the aſſiſting them in their wants, of what kind ſoever they be, whether ſickneſs or weakneſs of body, decay of underſtanding, or lowneſs of eſtate. In all theſe the child is bound to aſſiſt them, according to his ability. For the two former, weakneſs of body and infirmity of mind,

mind, none can doubt of the duty, when they remember how every child did in his infancy receive the same benefits from his parents. The child had then no strength to support, no understanding to guide itself. But the care of the parent supplied both these: and therefore in common gratitude, when either of these becomes the parent's case, the child is to perform the same office again. Likewise, as to the relieving their poverty, it is but just to sustain thy parents, who formerly sustained thee. And that this is also implied in *honouring our father and mother*, our Lord himself teaches. For when he accuses the Pharisees of *rejecting the commandment of* God, *that they might cleave to their own traditions*, he instances in this particular, concerning the relieving of parents. Hence it is manifest, this is a part of the duty, which is enjoined in the fifth commandment. And such a duty it is, that no pretence whatever can release us from the performance of it. This should be carefully observed. No fault of the parent can acquit a child of this duty. For as St. *Peter* tells servants, that they must *be subject*, out of conscience toward God, not only to *good and gentle* masters, *but also to the froward*: so certainly it concerns children, to perform every instance of filial duty, not only to kind and virtuous parents, but to the harshest and wickedest. For tho' gratitude to a kind and tender parent, be a forcible motive to make a child pay his duty, yet that is not the

principal, and much leſs the only ground for it. This is laid in the authority of God, who commands us to honour our parents. And therefore, were we to ſuppoſe a parent to have been ſo unnatural, as never to have done any thing to oblige a child, yet notwithſtanding this, the commandment of God would remain in its full force: and what is preſcribed therein we are bound to perform, whether the tie of gratitude be added or no.

Directions *to* Servants.

1. ST. *Paul* confirms his directions to *maſters* by that conſideration, that they alſo *have a maſter in heaven, and there is no reſpect of perſons with him.* He regards no man's outward condition: the poor and the rich are the ſame to him, and the ſervant is as his maſter. And the apoſtle, it ſeems, had learned of him, to be *without reſpect of perſons.* For he has the ſame care for ſervants as for their maſters, and is as large in his advices to them: nay, much more ſo; probably conſidering, that they had fewer advantages of education, and fewer opportunities of inſtruction. He is therefore remarkably particular in his directions to theſe, which are given at large in the epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, and to the *Coloſſians*. He gives them farther directions in the firſt epiſtle to *Timothy*, and again

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in the epiſtle to *Titus*. If we add hereto the advices given them by St. *Peter*, we ſhall have a full account of the duties of Chriſtian ſervants.

2. The great duty required of all ſervants is *ſubjection* or *obedience* to their maſters. So St. *Peter* (1 *Pet.* ii. 18.) *Servants be ſubject to your maſters*; St. *Paul*, *exhort ſervants to be ſubject to their own maſters*: and again, both to the *Epheſians* and *Coloſſians*, (*Eph.* vi. 5. *Col.* iii. 22.) *Servants, obey your maſters after the fleſh*. Allowing that theſe are your maſters only in a qualified ſenſe, and only during this ſtate of fleſh and blood; allowing you have but one proper, abſolute maſter, to whom you owe unlimited ſubjection: yet to theſe alſo, as being inveſted with a part of his power, you owe a limited obedience and ſubjection.

3. Indeed this obedience varies according to the various kinds of ſervice wherein ſervants are connected with their maſters. The ſorts of ſervants moſt common among us are, 1. *Labourers*, or workmen, with whom we agree by the day, to do ſuch work at ſuch a price, and who accordingly *ſerve* us during that time: 2. *Journeymen*, whom we agree with for a longer ſpace, to aſſiſt us in our calling, on ſuch conditions: 3. *Houſhold ſervants*, who uſually contract by the year, to perform, on the conſiderations ſpecified, either ſome particular branch of houſhold work, or (if there be only one ſervant) all manner of work

whatever from time to time is needful to be done in the family. 4. *Apprentices*, who are engaged for ſeveral years, chiefly to ſerve their maſters in their particular trade or calling. Now, how far are all or any of theſe obliged in conſcience, to *obey and be ſubject to their own maſters?*

4. The apoſtle anſwers. During the time agreed, *obey your maſters after the fleſh in all things:* that is, in all things ſpecified in that agreement which was made when you entered into ſervice. So a *labourer* or *workman* is, during his ſhort ſervice, to follow the direction of him that hired him. A *journeyman* is to do the ſame, with regard to that work which he agreed to perform. *Domeſtic ſervants* (to whom particularly St. *Peter* ſpeaks; for this is the proper meaning of οἱ οἰκέται) are obliged to obey their maſter or miſtreſs, either in one branch of houſhold-buſineſs, if they contracted for this, or otherways with reſpect to the whole work of the houſe: doing every thing at ſuch times and in ſuch a manner, as is appointed by their ſuperior. And an apprentice is to obey, according to the terms of his indenture, wherein it is uſually agreed, by his parents or friends, in what kind of ſervice he ſhall be employed, according to the diſcretion of his maſter.

5. To ſum up this. This firſt * part of a ſervant's obedience, is, to forbear doing things of his

* Several of the following paragraphs are partly extracted from Mr. Gouge on domeſtic duties.

his own head, without or againſt the conſent of his maſter: the reaſon whereof is plain. During the time of his ſervice, he is not his own; neither ought the things he does, to be for himſelf. Both his perſon and his actions are all his maſters; and the will of his maſter is his rule. In particular, ſervants, 1. may not go whither they will, but only where they are ordered, or at leaſt, permitted to go. 2. They ought not to do their own buſineſs. When *Jacob* was *Laban*'s ſervant, tho' he had flocks of his own, yet he fed his maſter's flocks, and committed his own to his ſons, *Gen.* xxx. 35, 36. 3. They are not to do what buſineſs they pleaſe themſelves, but what is allotted them by their maſter. 4. They ought not to marry, while the time of their ſervice laſts, without the conſent of their maſter. 5. They may not before their covenanted time expires, go away from their maſter.

6 The ſecond part of a ſervant's obedience is, to do whatever his maſter commands. To *look to the hand of his maſter*, (as *David* ſpeaks) ready to execute any thing he would have done. He is alſo to obey, by hearkening to his inſtructions, not only in matters of his ſecular calling, but likewiſe in the things of God, in whatever concerns his Chriſtian calling.

7. The manner wherein this obedience is to be performed, is largely declared by both the apoſtles. *Obey your maſters*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *with fear and trembling*. This indeed is not to be taken literally: it is a proverbial expreſſion, de-

noting the utmoſt eare, watchfulneſs, and diligenee. Do it *fearing* God; from a principle of loving fear, a fear of offending your maſter who is in heaven. *Be ſubject to your maſters with all fear*, ſaith St. *Peter*, with earneſt, tender reverence. With a eonſtant fear, either of injuring, grieving or diſpleaſing them, by any part of your behaviour.

8. So proper is this fear of his maſter in a ſervant, that the want of it is a denial of his maſter's plaee and power. This God intimates in that expoſtulation (*Mal.* i. 6.) *If I be a maſter, where is my fear?* That is, you plainly ſhew, you do not account me your maſter, beeauſe there is no fear of me in your heart. But whereever it is, it will draw ſervants on to perform all duty. And the more it abounds, the more deſire and endeavour there will be to do all things well.

9. An eſpecial means to create and preſerve this fear is, a due conſideration of the ground of their maſter's place and power: which is, the appointment of God: God has placed them in his ſtead, and in part given them his power. They are the deputies and miniſters of God. And therefore in ſcripture, the title *lord*, is after a peculiar manner, given them. There can therefore be no excuſe for deſpiſing them, tho' they ſhould be poor, mean, weak, or aged. The pooreſt and weakeſt have the ſame place and authority, which the richeſt and ſtrongeſt have. All bear the image of God: therefore, to

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deſpiſe them ſhews, that you regard not God's image at all.

10. This fear may be ſhewn either in ſpeech or behaviour: in the former, 1. By ſparing to ſpeak in the preſence of their maſter, without ſome neceſſary cauſe: 2. By forbearing to reply, when they obſerve their maſters unwilling they ſhould ſpeak any more: 3. By attending to what their maſters ſpeak: ſhewing ſuch a reſpect to them, as *Samuel* did to God, when he ſaid, *ſpeak; for thy ſervant heareth.* When they have juſt occaſion to ſpeak, this fear may be ſhewn, 1. By giving proper titles to their maſters, 2. By not talking more than the occaſion requires, 3. By ſpeaking in a meek and humble manner, 4. By chuſing a fit ſeaſon, both when he is at leiſure to hear, and when his mind is calm, not troubled with any paſſion, and laſtly, by giving a preſent and ready anſwer, to whatever their maſter ſays to them.

11. Servants ſhould ſhew a due fear of their maſters in their behaviour, 1. By ſuch dutiful and ſubmiſſive obeiſance, as becomes their ſex and place, according to the cuſtom of the country and place where they are, when they have occaſion to come to them, to go from them, or to receive any charge of them. 2. By *ſtanding* in his maſter's preſence. 3. By uncovering their heads before him, and 4. Sobriety and modeſty both in countenance and in the whole carriage. And from the ſame principle you ſhould endea-

vour *to pleaſe them well in all things*, (*Tit.* ii. 9.) Do every thing in the moſt obliging manner. If it be poſſible, pleaſe them in every thing: ſtudy to give them ſatisfaction in whatever you do. Do it in the way which they like beſt: labour that your whole ſervice, your whole behaviour may be acceptable to them. And do all this *with good will*, (*Eph.* vi. 7.) with cordial benevolence, with love to them, ſpringing from love to God: with an earneſt deſire to make their lives as eaſy and happy and comfortable as you can.

12. Yet all this-time, beware that you do not act *as men-pleaſers*, as having no further deſign than to pleaſe men, to gain their approbation or eſteem, to be well-thought of and well-ſpoken of; or to acquire any temporal advantage which may reſult from their favour or good-will. Serve *not with eye-ſervice*, (a certain conſequence of ſerving as men-pleaſers) but to do juſt the ſame in the abſence of your maſter, as you do when under his eye. Let his abſence or preſence make no difference in your induſtry and activity. You may examine yourſelf by this rule: there is no ſurer guard againſt ſelf-deceit. Do I labour in the very ſame manner at other times, as when my maſter is looking on? If I do not, I am no better than a *man-pleaſer*, I am a vile eye-ſervant in the ſight of God.

13. An infallible way of avoiding this, is to obey them with *ſingleneſs of heart*, that is, without

out any temporal motive, with a ſingle eye, with the one view of pleaſing God. The apoſtle inſiſts upon this over and over, and that in the ſtrongeſt manner. *Obey your maſters in the ſingleneſs of your heart as unto* Chriſt, *not with eye-ſervice, but as the ſervants of* Chriſt, *doing ſervice unto the* Lord, *not unto men.* And again, *ſervants obey your maſters in all things, with ſingleneſs of heart; and whatſoever ye do, do it as unto the* Lord, *not unto men. For* in whatſoever you do with a ſingle eye, *ye ſerve the* Lord, Chriſt. Whatſoever is thus done to any earthly maſter, he accounts done unto himſelf. And for all this he will ſay to you in that day, *Well done, good and faithful ſervants: inaſmuch as ye have done it to one of theſe,* for my ſake, *ye have done it unto me.*

14. Therefore in all things which ye do for your maſters, conſider yourſelves as *doing the will of* God. The will of your maſter is the will of God to you. His voice is, as it were, the voice of God. His work is to you the work of God, whom you obey in obeying him. But in all this, there is one reſtriction to be obſerved: maſters, as well as parents, are to be obeyed only *in the* Lord: only ſo far as their commands are not contrary to the commands of God. If ever this ſhould be the caſe, you cannot obey them: you muſt obey God rather than man. You muſt humbly and reſpectfully declare, that in all things elſe you are ready to obey: but that this you

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apprehend to be contrary to the plain word of God, and therefore you dare not do it. Neither may you refrain from obeying a plain command of God, becauſe your maſter forbids you ſo to do. You muſt at ſome times, (if not ſo often as you otherwiſe would) hear the word of God, join in public prayer, attend the table of the Lord, and call upon him in private. And if any maſter violently hinder you from ſo doing, you ſhould at all hazards quit his ſervice as ſoon as poſſible. Let no gain, no temporal conſideration whatever, induce you to continue therein. For *what is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul?*

15. * But *whatſoever ye do*, that is not contrary to the commands of God, *do it heartily*, ἐκ ψυχῆς, *from your ſoul*, your whole ſoul, from the bottom of your heart. This naturally reſults from the *doing it, as unto the* Lord, and is therefore twice mentioned in the ſame ſentence with it. Whatſoever you do, do it with your might, do it as quick as you can, and as well as you can. Do it at leaſt as well as you would do, if it were for yourſelf. If you are hired by the day, do as much work in each day as you can. The cuſtom of the trade is nothing to you, nor the example of thoſe that work with you. Do as much to-day as you can without hurting yourſelf, or diſabling you from doing the ſame to-morrow: and juſt as much as you would, if it were your own work, or if you were to be paid by the piece. Do the ſame thing, if you are an houſhold-ſervant;

vant; putting forth all your ſtrength, ridding away all the buſineſs that you can, and uſing therein all the underſtanding which God has given you, in order to do every thing in the moſt excellent manner, whereof you are capable.

16. Theſe general directions, all ſervants are to obſerve, of conſcience toward God, and that whether their maſters be good or bad, Heathens, (in fact, if not in name) or Chriſtians. For the character of the maſter, while he is ſuch, does not vacate the duty of the ſervant. Suppoſe they are mere Heathens, men that neither love nor fear, nor ſerve God, (a very poſſible caſe even in what we call a Chriſtian country) ſtill *let as many ſervants as are under the yoke* (for the ſervice of theſe is a *yoke* indeed) *count their own maſters worthy of all honour**. Tho' they are unbelieving and unholy, yet in conſideration of the place which God has aſſigned them, for his ſake, and in obedience to his appointment, *count them worthy of all* the *honour* above deſcribed. Pay them all the reverence in your heart, and ſhew them all that outward reſpect, both in word and action, *that the name of* God *and his doctrine be not blaſphemed* by thoſe ungodly men, who would not fail to lay the blame of your neglect, on the religion which you profeſs. On the other hand, *as many as have faithful maſters*, real believers in Chriſt, let not this adminiſter any pretence, for leſs exactneſs in their duty. *Let them not deſ-*

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* 1 Tim. vi. 1.

pise them, becauſe they are brethren. Let them not on this account abate any thing of the inward reverence they owe, or of their outward reſpect and obedience. *But rather do them ſervice,* obſerve the preceding directions with regard to them, more earneſtly and exactly, *becauſe they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit:* enjoying the ſame communion with God on earth, and looking for the ſame inheritance in heaven.

17. But beſides theſe general ones, there are ſeveral particular directions given by the apoſtle to all Chriſtian ſervants. As 1. *Be honeſt, not purloining,* (Tit. ii. 10.) not *ſecreting,* or privately *keeping back* any thing for yourſelf: not taking, uſing, diſpoſing, or giving away the leaſt thing belonging to thy maſter, without his leave, without his knowledge and conſent firſt aſked and obtained. To do otherwiſe is no better than plain theft, and cuts off all the pretenſions to honeſty. Equally diſhoneſt it is to hurt or waſte any thing, or to let it be loſt thro' their careleſſneſs or negligence. Whatever therefore your fellow-ſervants do, keep yourſelf pure: and let not the cuſtom of the world, but the word of God be the rule of all your actions.

18. Secondly, *Be true,* not barely, tell no willful lie, either to your maſter or your fellow-ſervants, but let *all your converſation be in ſimplicity, and godly ſincerity.* Even if you are overtaken in a fault, uſe no deceit, no equivocating

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or prevarication to hide it, or to excuſe either yourſelf or any of your fellow-ſervants, or prevent anger that may enſue. Herein alſo St. *Peter* obſerves, Chriſt *left you an example, that you might tread in his ſteps. He* not only *did*, committed, *no ſin, but there was no guile found in his mouth.* Let there be none found in yours: in ſpite of all temptations to the contrary, *ſpeak the truth from your heart*, and whatever inconveniences ſpring herefrom, God will turn them all into bleſſings.

Thirdly, *Be faithful:* as St. *Paul* expreſſes it, *ſhew all good fidelity*, Tit. ii. 10. This is *good*, beautiful, honourable in all men. It ennobles the loweſt ſtation, and cauſes it to ſhine in the eyes of God and man. Be faithful, 1. With regard to your maſter's goods. Preſerving, yea, and increaſing them to the uttermoſt of your power. Whatever is committed to your truſt, whether within doors or without, ſo carefully preſerve, that it be not loſt, ſpoiled, or impaired under your hands. If you ſee any damage done to your goods, redreſs it yourſelf, if you can: if you can't immediately make it known to your maſter, that he may find means of redreſſing it. And not only preſerve, but do all that in you lies, to increaſe your maſter's goods. The talents which were committed to the faithful ſervants, were by their induſtry increaſed to as many more. So that it is not ſufficient, not to leſſen your maſter's ſubſtance, but you ſhould labour

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to better it. Study his intereſt as you would your own, and promote it by all poſſible means. Regard not your pleaſure, your eaſe, nor any thing but your conſcience, in compariſon of it. Be faithful, 2. With regard to his reputation. Conceal his faults and infirmities as far as poſſible. Some of theſe you can hardly avoid obſerving, being continually under his roof. But whatever you obſerve of this kind, keep it in your own breaſt. Let it go no farther; reveal it not to ſtrangers, no, nor even to your fellow-ſervants. Never make either his ſuppoſed or real failings, the ſubject of your diſcourſe. Beware you do not wound him behind his back, nor ſuffer others to do it in your preſence. Endure no tatling or tale-bearing concerning him in the family, but prevent or ſtop it with all diligence. Whenever you can do it conſiſtently with truth, and ſo far as you can, defend him. And in every point, be juſt as tender of his character as of your own. To this head may be referred faithfulneſs in keeping the ſecrets of your maſter. Many of theſe you cannot but know, by reaſon of the cloſe connexion which is between you, your continually abiding ſo near together, and the many employments he has for you. All theſe therefore you are carefully to conceal, provided they tend not to the diſhonour of God, or to the danger of the church or common-wealth, or indeed of any private perſon. For *Jonathan* is commended for diſcovering the miſchief which

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Saul had ſecretly intended againſt *David*, 1 *Sam.* xx. 12. Be faithful, 3. with regard to his ſoul. With all plainneſs which your ſtation allows, and yet with all reſpect and humility *rebuke, and ſuffer not ſin upon him.* The time, the manner, and the other circumſtances relating to this difficult taſk, God will give you to chuſe aright, if your eye be ſingle, and you ſeek his direction by earneſt prayer.

20. Fourthly, *Be patient.* In your patience *poſſeſſing your ſouls*, ſteddily follow the preceding directions, and *be* thus *ſubject, not only to the good and gentle* maſters, but alſo to the froward: to thoſe who are neither good nor gentle, who have neither religion nor good-nature, that it may appear you do your *ſervice unto the* Lord, *and not unto men.* But it may be proper in the mean time to obſerve, that the ſtate of *Engliſh* ſervants, is widely different from the ſtate of thoſe to whom St. *Paul* and St. *Peter* wrote. Many of thoſe, perhaps the greater part were ſlaves, who by the miſerable conſtitution of their country, were the abſolute property of their maſter, as much as were his ſheep and oxen. Therefore it was not in their power to leave or change their maſter, but they were conſtrained to ſtay with them till death. Conſequently, thoſe directions were peculiarly neceſſary for thoſe who were in ſuch a ſituation: *This is thank-worthy, if a man for conſcience toward* God, *endure grief, ſuffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if when*

when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? But if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God, 1 Pet. ii. 19, 20. But to those who are born under an happier constitution, undoubtedly the first advice should be, *If thou mayst be free*, from a froward, ill-natured man, then use it rather. Do not bind yourself at all, if you can honestly avoid it (as you generally may) to any, who you have reason to believe is an unjust or an unmerciful man. And if you are bound to such an one already, yet if you should *suffer wrongfully* from him, *if you do well*, and suffer notwithstanding, it is by no means your duty to endure it. Rather it is your duty to appeal to the magistrate, who *is the minister of* God *to thee for good*, and to desire of him such a remedy, as the laws of your country allow. In this manner *commit yourself* and your cause *to him that judgeth righteously*. But even in this case, till you are free from the unrighteous man, remember the example Christ has left: *Who when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered, he threatened not.* How much more should you *tread in* these *his steps*, with regard to things of smaller moment, with regard to those inconsiderable instances either of injustice or unkindness, which are to be expected almost in every family, and for which even our laws provide no remedy? Here undoubtedly you are called to suffer: and see that you do so with all meekness and gentleness.

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Not only *when* you *are reviled, revile not again*, but *answer not again*, Tit. ii. 10. Open not your mouth, unless silence might have the appearance of sullenness or disrespect: and then do it in as few words, as the matter will bear, and with all the softness you are master of.

21. Before he closes the subject, St. *Paul* does not fail to remind you, what great encouragement you have, to persevere in all these duties of your station, whatever difficulties you meet with therein. For hereby you *may adorn the gospel of* God *our Saviour in all things*. So strong an expression is scarce to be found in all the writings of the apostle; when he speaks to persons of the highest rank, as he here uses to men of low degree. You therefore are peculiarly called of God, to be an honour to your profession, your general profession of Christians; to shew what manner of men they are who *serve the* Lord Christ: see then that you in particular *walk circumspectly*, accurately, exactly: that either your unbelieving masters *may be won* by your conversation, or at least believers confirmed and comforted.

22. Still further encouragement you have in *knowing that of the* Lord *ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance:* that inheritance reserved for you in heaven, which is of infinitely greater value, than any which your master now enjoys, or any which you can receive on earth. You know that the day is coming when your common Master

Maſter will deſcend in the clouds of heaven: and you are aſſured, in that day, *Whatſoever good thing a man* hath *done*, while he was *ſerving* God *in his generation, the ſame ſhall he receive from the* Lord, *whether he be bond or free: The ſame*— That is, a reward proportionable thereto, in an additional degree of glory. Therefore, let nothing be wanting now. *Work your work betimes, and in his time he will give you your reward.* Now be honeſt, be true, be faithful, be patient. Now *obey your maſters with fear*, yea, *with fear and trembling*. Do them ſervice *with ſingleneſs of heart, with good-will, with your* whole *ſoul.* Do this for the honour of the goſpel, for the glory of God your Saviour, for the preſent good of your own ſoul, and for the increaſe of your eternal inheritance.

An Extract from Mr. LAW's

TREATISE

On CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

CHAP. I.

THE wisdom of mankind has, for several ages, been enquiring into the nature of man, and the nature of the world in which he is placed.

The wants and miseries of human nature, and the vanity of worldly enjoyments, have made it difficult for the wisest men to tell, what human happiness was, or wherein it consisted.

It has pleased the infinite goodness of God to satisfy our enquiries, by a revelation made to the world by his Son Jesus Christ.

This revelation has laid open the great secrets of providence from the creation of the world. It has explained the present state of things, and given man all the information that is necessary, both to give him rest here, and to lead him safely to everlasting happiness.

It is now only necessary that the poor wisdom of man do not exalt itself against God, that we suffer our eyes to be opened by him that made

them, and our lives to be conducted by him, in whom *we live, move and have our being.*

II. As happineſs is the ſole end of all our labours, ſo this revelation aims at nothing elſe.

It gives us right notions of ourſelves, of our true good and real evil; it ſhews us our true condition, both our greatneſs and meanneſs, our happineſs and miſery.

* Before this, man was a mere riddle to himſelf, and his condition full of darkneſs and perplexity; a reſtleſs inhabitant of a miſerable diſordered world, *walking in a vain ſhadow and diſquieting himſelf in vain.*

* But this light has diſperſed the anxiety of his vain conjectures. It has, by adding heaven to earth, and eternity to time, opened ſuch a glorious view of things, as leads men, even in this world, to a *peace of* God *which paſſeth all underſtanding.*

III. * This revelation acquaints us, that we have a ſpirit within us, which was created after the divine image; that this ſpirit is now in a fallen condition; that the body in which it is placed is its ſepulchre, where it is enſlaved to fleſhly thoughts, blinded with falſe notions of good and evil, and dead to all taſte of its true happineſs.

It teaches us, that the world in which we live, is alſo in a diſordered, irregular ſtate, and curſed for the ſake of man; that it is no longer the paradiſe that God made it, but the remains of a drowned

drowned world, full of marks of God's displeasure, and the sin of its inhabitants.

That it is a mere wilderness, a state of darkness, a vale of misery, where vice and madness, dreams and shadows, variously please and torment the short, miserable lives of men.

Devils also, and evil spirits have here their residence, promoting the works of darkness, and wandering up and down, seeking whom they may devour.

So that man, in his natural state, is like a person sick of variety of diseases, knowing neither his distemper nor his cure, and inclosed in a place where he can hear or see, or feel, or taste of nothing but what tends to enflame his disorders.

IV. * But Christianity puts an end to this state of things, blots out all the ideas of worldly wisdom, brings the world itself to ashes, and creates all anew. It calls man from an animal life and earthly societies, to be born again of the Holy Ghost, and be made a member of the kingdom of God.

It crushes into nothing the concerns of this life, condemns it as a state of vanity and darkness, and leads man to a happiness with God in the realms of light.

It proposes the purifying of our souls, enlivened with the divine spirit: it sets before us new goods

and evils, and forms us to a glorious participation of the divine nature.

This is the one end of Chriſtianity. It does not leave us to grovel on in the deſires of the fleſh, to caſt about for worldly happineſs, and wander in darkneſs and exile from God: but the ſole deſign of it is, to lead us from all thoughts of reſt here, to ſeparate us from worldly tempers, to deliver us from the folly of our paſſions, the ſlavery of our own natures, the power of evil ſpirits, and unite us to God, the true fountain of real good. This is the mighty change which Chriſtianity aims at, to reform our whole natures, renew our ſouls in the image of God, and make them the inhabitants of heavenly and immortal bodies.

V. The manner by which it changes our whole ſtate is equally great and wonderful.

I am the way, the truth, and the life, ſaith our bleſſed Lord, *no man cometh unto the Father but by me.*

As all things were created by the Son of God, and *without him was not any thing made that was made,* ſo are all things redeemed and reſtored by the ſame divine perſon.

As nothing could come into being without him, ſo nothing can enter into a ſtate of happineſs but by him.

The dignity of this redemption at once confounds the pride, and relieves the miſery of man.

How

How fallen muſt he be from God, that ſhould need ſo great a mediator! And, on the other hand, how full of comfort is the thought that ſo high a method, ſo ſtupendous a means ſhould be taken to reſtore him to a ſtate of peace and favour with God!

VI. * This is the true point of view, in which every Chriſtian is to behold himſelf. He is to overlook the poor projects of this life, and conſider himſelf as a creature, thro' his natural corruption, falling into a ſtate of endleſs miſery; but by the mercy of God, redeemed to a condition of everlaſting happineſs.

All the precepts and doctrines of the goſpel are founded on theſe two great truths, the deplorable corruption of human nature, and its new birth in Chriſt Jeſus.

The one includes all the miſery, the other all the happineſs of man.

It is on theſe that the whole frame of Chriſtianity is built, forbidding only ſuch things as faſten us to the diſorders of ſin, and commanding only thoſe duties which lead us into the liberty of the Sons of God.

So that if we think and act as Chriſtians, we act ſuitably to theſe terms of our condition, fearing and avoiding all the motions of our corrupted nature, cheriſhing the ſecret inſpirations of the Holy Spirit, opening our minds for the recep-

tion of the divine light, and preſſing after all the perfections of our new birth.

All Chriſtians are continually to behave themſelves conformable to this double capacity. We are to fear and watch and pray, like men that are always on the brink of eternal death; and to believe and hope, labour and aſpire, like Chriſtians that are called to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.

VII. This knowledge of ourſelves makes human life a ſtate of infinite importance, placed upon ſo dreadful a point betwixt two ſuch eternities.

Well might our Saviour ſay to one that begged firſt to go and bury his father, *Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.*

For what is all the buſtle and hurry of the world but dead ſhew, and its greateſt actors but dead men, when compared with that real life to which the followers of Chriſt are redeemed?

Had we been made only for this world, worldly wiſdom had been our higheſt wiſdom; but ſeeing we are redeemed to an intirely contrary ſtate, worldly wiſdom is now our greateſt fooliſhneſs.

It is now our only wiſdom, to underſtand our new ſtate, and conduct ourſelves by the principles of our redemption.

VIII. The nature of our Chriſtian calling is of that concern, as to deſerve all our thoughts, and

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is indeed only to be perceived by great ſerioufneſs and attention of mind.

The Chriſtian ſtate is an inviſible life, ſupported, not by ſenſible goods, but the ſpiritual graces of faith and hope: ſo that a man buſied in earthly cares and enjoyments, perceives nothing of this great and heavenly calling.

The changes which Chriſtianity make in the preſent ſtate of things, are all inviſible: its goods and evils, which are the only true ſtandards of our actions, are not ſubject to the knowledge of our ſenſes.

In God *we live and move and have our being*; but how unſeen, how unfelt is all this!

Chriſt *is the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world, the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all things. The whole creation ſubſiſts in him and by him. No perſon is in any favour with God, but by this great Mediator. But how inviſible, how unknown to all our ſenſes is this ſtate of things!

Chriſtians are temples of the Holy Ghoſt, conſecrated to God, members of Chriſt's myſtical body, of his fleſh and his bones, receiving life, ſpirit and motion, from him their head.

But our ſenſes ſee no farther than our parents and kindred according to the fleſh, and fix our hearts to earthly friendſhips and relations. Well then may this life be deemed a ſtate of darkneſs,

ſince it thus clouds and covers all the true appearances of things, and keeps our minds inſenſible and unaffected with matters of ſuch infinite moment.

IX. * Would we therefore know our true condition, we muſt ſearch after *a life that is hid with* Chriſt *in* God. We muſt conſider ourſelves as parts of Chriſt's myſtical body, and as members of the kingdom of heaven. In vain do we conſider the beauty and ſtrength of our bodies, our alliances with men, and the diſtinctions of this world; for theſe things no more conſtitute the ſtate of human life, than rich *coffins* or beautiful *monuments* conſtitute the ſtate of the dead.

We juſtly pity the laſt poor efforts of human greatneſs, when we ſee a breathleſs carcaſe lying in *ſtate*. It appears ſo far from any real honour, that it rather looks like ridiculing the miſery of our nature. But were religion to form our judgments, the life of a proud, voluptuous, ſenſual man, tho' ſhining in all the ſplendour of the world, would give us no higher an idea of human dignity, than a poor corpſe laid in ſtate.

For a ſinner, when glorying in the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life, is a more ſhocking ſight of miſery ridiculed, than any pageantry that can expoſe the dead.

X. We

X. We have an apoſtle's authority to ſay, that *he who liveth in pleaſure is dead whilſt he liveth.*

This ſhews us, that when we enquire what our life is, we muſt think of ſomething higher than the vigour of our blood, the gaiety of our ſpirits, or the enjoyment of ſenſual pleaſures: ſince theſe, tho' the allowed ſigns of living men, are often undeniable proofs of dead Chriſtians.

When therefore we would truly know what our life or happineſs is, we muſt look at nothing that is ſenſible or temporal. We may as well dig in the earth for wiſdom as look at fleſh and blood to ſee what we are, or at worldly enjoyments to find what we want, or at temporal evils to ſee what we have to fear.

We muſt therefore, if we would conceive our true ſtate, our real good and evil, look farther than theſe dim eyes of fleſh can carry our views. We muſt, with the eyes of faith, penetrate into the inviſible world, the world of ſpirits, and conſider our order and condition among them; a world which, as St. *John* ſpeaks, *hath no need of the ſun, neither of the moon, to ſhine in it; for the glory of* God *doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.* For it is there, among eternal beings, that we muſt take an eternal fellowſhip, or fall into a kingdom of darkneſs and everlaſting miſery.

XI. * Chriſtianity is ſo noble in its ends, ſo extenſive in its views, that it has no leſs ſubjects than theſe to entertain our thoughts.

It buries our bodies, burns the preſent world, triumphs over death by a general reſurrection, and opens all into an eternal ſtate.

It never conſiders us in any other reſpect than as fallen ſpirits, it diſregards worldly diſtinctions, and propoſes nothing to our fears but eternal miſery, nothing to our hopes but an endleſs enjoyment of God.

This is the great, the important condition, in which Chriſtianity has placed us, above our bodies, above the world, above death, to be preſent at the diſſolution of all things, to ſee the earth in flames, and the heavens wrapt up like a ſcroll, to ſtand at the general reſurrection, to appear at the univerſal judgment, and to live for ever, when all that our eyes have ſeen is paſſed away and gone.

XII. * Take therefore upon thee a temper ſuitable to this greatneſs of thy condition. Remember that thou art an eternal ſpirit; that thou art but for a few months or years in a ſtate of fleſh and blood, only to try whether thou ſhalt be for ever happy with God, or for ever miſerable with the devil.

Thou wilt hear of other concerns and other greatneſs in this world. Thou wilt ſee every order of men, every family, every perſon purſuing

ing ſome fancied happineſs, as if the world had not only happineſs, but a particular kind of happineſs for all its inhabitants.

But when thou ſeeſt this, fancy thou ſaweſt all the world aſleep: the prince no longer a prince: the beggar no longer begging, but every man ſleeping out of his proper ſtate; ſome happy, others tormented, and all changing their condition, as faſt as one fooliſh dream could ſucceed another.

When thou haſt ſeen this, if thou wilt, thou mayſt go to ſleep too, thou mayſt lie down and dream. And this is all; for be as happy as the world can make thee, all is but ſleeping and dreaming: and what is ſtill worſe, it it like ſleeping in a ſhip, when thou ſhouldſt be pumping for life, or dreaming thou art a prince, when thou ſhouldſt be redeeming thyſelf from ſlavery.

XIII. This is no imaginary flight of a melancholy fancy, but the real nature of things.

* For if thou art that immortal nature, that fallen ſpirit which religion teaches us; if thou art to meet death, reſurrection, and judgment, as the forerunners of an eternal ſtate, what are all the little flaſhes of pleaſure, the changing appearances of worldly happineſs, but ſo many ſorts of dreams?

* How canſt thou talk of the advantage of fortune, the pleaſures of food or apparel, without being in a dream?

Is the *beggar* asleep, when he fancies he is building himself fine houses? Is the *prisoner* in a dream, when he imagines himself in open fields and fine groves? And canst thou think thy immortal spirit is awake, while it is delighting itself in the shadows and bubbles of worldly happiness?

For if it be true, that man is upon his trial, if the trial is for eternity, if life is but a vapour, what is there that deserves a serious thought, but how to get well out of the world, and make it a right passage to our eternal state?

XIV. *It is the manner of some countries, in the burial of their dead, to put a staff and shoes and money in the sepulchre along with the corpse.

We see the folly and ignorance of such a poor contrivance to assist the dead: but if we did but understand what is life, we should see as much folly in the poor contrivances to assist the living.

For how many things do people labour after, break their rest and peace to get, which yet when gotten are of just as much real use to them, as a staff and shoes to a corpse under ground? They are always adding something to their life, which is only like adding another pair of shoes to a body in the grave.

Thou mayst hire more servants, new paint thy rooms, and put on richer apparel: and these will

will help thee to be happy, as *golden* ſtaffs or *painted* ſhoes will help a dead man to walk.

XV. * If thou remembereſt, that the whole race of mankind are a race of fallen ſpirits, that paſs thro' this world, as an arrow paſſeth thro' the air, thou wilt ſoon perceive, that there is no wiſdom or happineſs, but in getting away to the beſt advantage.

If thou remembereſt, that this life is but a vapour, that thou art in the body, only to be holy, humble, and heavenly-minded; that thou ſtandeſt upon the brink of death, reſurrection, and judgment, and that theſe great things will ſuddenly come upon thee like a thief in the night, thou wilt ſee a vanity in the things of this world, greater than any words can expreſs.

Do but therefore know thyſelf as religion hath made thee known; do but ſee thyſelf in the light which Chriſt has brought into the world, and then thou wilt ſee that nothing concerns thee, but what concerns an everlaſting ſpirit that is going to God; and that there are no enjoyments here that are worth a thought, but ſuch as may adorn thee with that holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord.

XVI. * This is the end of Chriſtianity. It is not a ſchool for the teaching of moral virtue. It is deeper and more divine in its deſigns: it implies an entire change of heart, a full dedica-

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tion of ourſelves, our ſouls and bodies unto God.

Our bleſſed Saviour came into the world, not to make any compoſition with it, but to put an end to the deſigns of fleſh and blood, and to ſhew us, we muſt either renounce this world to become Sons of God, or by enjoying it, take our portion among damned ſpirits.

Chriſtianity is a ſtate of things that wholly regards eternity: it knows of no other goods and evils, but ſuch as relate to another life.

It is a kingdom of heaven that has no other intereſts in this world, than as it takes its members out of it; and when the number of the elect is compleat, this world will be conſumed with fire, as having no other reaſon for its exiſtence, than the furniſhing members for that bleſſed ſociety, which is to laſt for ever.

I cannot here omit obſerving the folly of human wiſdom, which, full of imaginary projects, pleaſes itſelf with its laſting eſtabliſhments in a world doomed to deſtruction, and which is to laſt no longer than till a ſufficient number is redeemed out of it.

Did we ſee a number of animals haſtening to take up their apartments, and contending for the beſt places in a building that was to be beat down as ſoon as its old inhabitants were got ſafe out, we ſhould ſee a contention full as wiſe as the wiſdom of worldly ambition.

XVII. This

XVII. That Chriſtianity implies a change of nature, is plain from the whole tenor of the goſpel.

The Saviour of the world ſaith, *That except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of* God. We are told, that *to as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the Sons of* God; *which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of* God.

Theſe words plainly teach us, that Chriſtianity implies an entire change of nature: that as our birth was to us the beginning of a new life, and brought us into a ſociety of earthly enjoyments, ſo Chriſtianity is another birth, that brings us into a condition as new as when we firſt ſaw the light.

We begin again to be, when we enter upon freſh terms of life, have new tempers, new hopes and fears, and an entire change of every thing that can be called good or evil.

This new birth is the very eſſence and ſoul of Chriſtianity; it is the ſeal of the promiſes, the mark of our ſonſhip, the earneſt of our inheritance, and the ſure proof of our acceptance with God.

XVIII. If we would know what a change our new life in Chriſt implies, let us conſider what it is to be born of God.

Whoſoever

Whoſoever is born of God, ſaith the apoſtle, *doth not commit ſin. For his ſeed remaineth in him: and he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of* God. *In this the children of* God *are manifeſt, and the children of the devil.* And again, *We know, that whoſoever is born of* God *ſinneth not, but he that is begotten of* God *keepeth himſelf, and the wicked one toucheth him not.* 1 John iii. 10. v. 18.

The ſame apoſtle tells us, *Whoſoever is born of* God *overcometh the world.* He overcometh all worldly deſires and worldly fears. He is crucified unto the world and the world crucified unto him. He is dead to the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life. And he feareth not them that can kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do.

We muſt therefore examine into the ſtate of our minds, and ſee whether we are thus changed in our natures, thus born again: whether we are ſo ſpiritual, as to have overcome the world: ſo holy, as that we cannot commit ſin; ſince it is the undeniable doctrine of ſcripture, that this new birth is as neceſſary to ſalvation, as the believing in Jeſus Chriſt.

XX. There is perhaps no duty more contrary to fleſh and blood than the loving our enemies. But this is eaſy to thoſe that are born of God.

For take but away earthly goods and evils, and you take away all hatred and malice. For they are the only cauſes of thoſe baſe tempers.

He

He therefore that *hath overcome the world*, hath overcome all the occaſions of envy and ill nature, and can pity, pray for and forgive all his enemies, who want leſs forgiveneſs from him than he hath received from his heavenly Father.

Let us here awhile contemplate the height and depth of Chriſtian holineſs, and that godlike ſpirit which it implies! And this alone might convince us, that to be Chriſtians, we muſt be born again: we muſt ſo change our very natures, as to have no deſire in our ſouls, but that of being like God.

And till we rejoice and delight only in God, we cannot have this love to our fellow-creatures.

We may therefore learn from this, as well as from what was obſerved before, that Chriſtianity does not conſiſt in doing no harm, nor in doing good, (as it is called) nor yet in any particular moral virtues, as ſome idly ſuppoſe; but in an entire change of our hearts, of all our natural tempers, and a life wholly devoted to God.

XXI. The ſame doctrine is farther taught by our bleſſed Saviour, when ſpeaking of little children, he ſaith, *Suffer them to come unto me; for of ſuch is the kingdom of* God. Luke xviii. 16.

Now the peculiar condition of infants is ſuch, that they have every thing to learn; they are to be taught by others what they are to hope and fear, and wherein their proper happineſs conſiſts.

And in this ſenſe firſt we are to become as little

little children, to be as tho' we had every thing to learn, and ſuffer ourſelves to be taught, what we are to chuſe, and what we are to avoid; to pretend to no wiſdom of our own, but be ready to be taught of God, the only way of purſuing that happineſs, which God in Chriſt propoſes to us; and to accept it with ſuch ſimplicity of mind as little children, who have nothing of their own to oppoſe to it.

XXII. But is this infant temper eſſential to Chriſtianity? Does the kingdom of God conſiſt only of thoſe that have it? This is another undeniable proof that Chriſtianity implies a *new nature*; ſuch as having renounced the prejudices of life, the maxims of human wiſdom, gives itſelf with a child-like ſubmiſſion and ſimplicity, to be entirely governed by the doctrines and Spirit of Chriſt.

Craft and policy, ſelfiſh cunning, proud abilities and vain endowments, have no admittance into this holy ſtate of ſociety with Chriſt in God.

The wiſdom of this world, the intrigues of life, the deſigns of greatneſs and ambition, lead to another kingdom. He that follows Chriſt muſt be emptied of this vain furniture, and put on the meek ornament of infant and undeſigning ſimplicity.

Where

Where is the wife? Where is the ſcribe? Where is the diſputer of this world? Hath not God *made fooliſh the wiſdom of this world?*

If we will partake of the wiſdom of God, we muſt judge of this world and its moſt boaſted gifts, as the wiſdom of God judgeth of them; we muſt deem them fooliſhneſs, and with undivided hearts labour after one wiſdom, one happineſs, in being entirely devoted to God.

XXIII. This compariſon of Chriſtians to little children, may alſo remind us of a certain ſimplicity of behaviour, which is always the effect of a heart truly and entirely devoted to God.

As worldly men are therefore reſerved, artful and deceitful, becauſe they have many and ſecret ends to bring about; ſo they whoſe heart is wholly devoted to God, being wholly taken up with one great deſign, and having no little ſucceſſes that they labour after, have no need of artifice or diſguiſe; and ſo are naturally open, ſimple and undeſigning in all the affairs of life.

XXIV. From all theſe conſiderations it appears, that Chriſtianity implies a *new nature*, and a life entirely devoted to God.

Now if this be Chriſtianity, it may ſerve to inſtruct two ſorts of people:

Firſt, Thoſe who are content with an outward religion; whoſe Chriſtianity lies in outward decency and regularity of life.

I don't

I don't mean thoſe that are inſincere or hypocritical: but all thoſe who are content with outward religion, with any thing ſhort of that inward holineſs, that newneſs of ſpirit which the goſpel deſcribes.

They ſhould conſider that charity, chaſtity, ſobriety and juſtice may be practiſed without Chriſtianity. A Jew, a Heathen may be (what you call) charitable and temperate: but to make theſe parts of Chriſtianity, they muſt proceed from a heart truly turned to God, that is full of an infant ſimplicity, that is crucified with Chriſt, that is born again of the Spirit, that has overcome the world. Temperance or juſtice without this, may be the temperance of a Jew or a Heathen: but it is not Chriſtian temperance or juſtice, till it proceeds from a Chriſtian ſpirit. Could we do and ſuffer all that Chriſt himſelf did or ſuffered, yet if it was not all done in the ſame temper, in the Spirit of Chriſt, it would profit us nothing.

XXV. A Chriſtian is ſober, charitable and juſt, upon the ſame principles and with the ſame ſpirit that he receives the Holy communion; as acts of obedience to God, and as ſo many inſtances of a heart truly devoted to God.

A Chriſtian is ſober, not only ſo far as ſuits with a regular life, but ſo as becomes one who is born of the Holy Spirit, who dwelleth in God and God in him.

He

He is charitable, not only ſo far as ſuits with his natural temper, and with good eſteem among men; but in ſuch a meaſure as is ſuitable to the doctrines and ſpirit of the goſpel.

For indeed, neither charity, nor temperance, nor juſtice, nor any other virtues (as they are called) are parts of Chriſtian holineſs, till they ſpring from holineſs of heart, from the mind that was in Chriſt.

This is what cannot be too much conſidered by thoſe whoſe religion has made no change in their hearts; who fancy themſelves Chriſtians, only becauſe of the regularity of their lives, altho' they have never experienced a renewal in the ſpirit of their minds, who pray without devotion, give alms without charity, and are Chriſtians without the Spirit of Chriſtianity.

XXVI. Secondly, This doctrine may ſerve to inſtruct thoſe who are convinced, they have been hitherto ſtrangers to religion.

Some people who begin to look toward religion, think they have done enough, when they have reformed the outward courſe of their lives; when they have left off their groſs vices and follies, or are grown careful of ſome particular duties.

Thus a man who has been a drunkard many years, thinks he has made a ſufficient change by becoming temperate: another imagines, he is in a very good and ſafe ſtate, becauſe he does not neglect

neglect the public worſhip, as he uſed to do: a lady fancies ſhe lives enough to God becauſe ſhe has left off plays, and lives more at home than formerly.

But ſuch people ſhould conſider, that Chriſtianity does not conſiſt in the fewneſs of our vices; no nor in any one particular virtue, nor yet in the outward amendment of our lives: but in ſuch a thorough change of heart, as makes the love of God the ſpring and meaſure and rule of all our tempers and actions.

XXVII. It is a miſerable error, to think we are Chriſtians, becauſe we are leſs vain or covetous, more ſober and decent in our behaviour than we uſed to be. Yet this is the caſe with many, who think they are well, becauſe they are not ſo bad as they were, becauſe they are reformed from outward wickedneſs; not conſidering how entire a reformation of heart, as well as life, Chriſtianity implies.

But let ſuch people remember, that they who thus meaſure *themſelves by themſelves are not wiſe*. Let them remember that they are not diſciples of Chriſt, till they have, like him, *offered their whole ſoul and body as a reaſonable living ſacrifice to* God; that they are not members of Chriſt's myſtical body, till they are united unto him by a *new ſpirit*; that they have not entered into the kingdom of God, till they have entered into an *infant ſimplicity* of heart, till they are ſo born

of

of God as *not to commit ſin*, ſo full of an heavenly Spirit as to have *overcome the world*.

Let them remember, *He that is in* Chriſt *is a new creature*, and that nothing ſhort of this will avail before God, nothing leſs than the entire renewal of the ſoul in righteouſneſs and all true holineſs. Let them remember, that there is no religion that will ſtand us in any ſtead, but that which is the converſion of the heart to God, when all our tempers are holy, heavenly, divine, ſpringing from a ſoul that is *born again* of the Spirit, and tends with one full bent to a perfection and happineſs in the enjoyment of God.

XXVIII. Let us therefore look carefully to ourſelves, and conſider what manner of ſpirit we are of: let us not think our condition ſafe, becauſe we are of this or that church or perſuaſion, or becauſe we are ſtrict obſervers of the outward offices of religion. For we can't but ſee, theſe are marks that belong to more than belong to Chriſt. All are not his that *propheſy*, or even *caſt out devils, and work miracles in his name*. Much leſs thoſe who, with corrupt minds and worldly hearts, are only *baptized in his name*.

* If religion has raiſed us into a *new world*; if it has filled us with *new ends* of life; if it has taken poſſeſſion of our hearts, altered the whole turn of our minds, and changed the whole ſtream of our affections: if it has given us *new joys and griefs, new hopes and fears*; if all things in us are

are become new: if *the love of* God *is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost given unto us*, and this *Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of* God: then are we Christians, not in name only, but in truth; then we do believe in the Holy Jesus, and we shall *rejoice in the day of* Christ, *that we have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*

CHAP. II.

CHRISTIANITY requires a renouncing of the world, and all worldly tempers.

I. The Christian religion being to raise a new, spiritual, and, as yet, invisible world, and to place man among thrones, principalities and spiritual beings, is at entire enmity with this present corrupt state of flesh and blood.

It ranks the world, with the flesh and the devil, as an equal enemy to those glorious ends which it proposes.

Accordingly the gospel lays its foundation, in utterly renouncing those false goods and enjoyments, which feed the vanity and corruption of our nature, fill our hearts with foolish and wicked passions, and keep us separate from God, the only happiness of all spirits.

II. For

II. For not only the vices, the wickedneſs, and vanity of this world, but even its moſt lawful concerns, if unduly purſued, make men unable to enter into the true ſtate of Chriſtianity.

He who is buſied in an *honeſt* calling, may, on that account, be finally rejected of God.

* For it is no more pardonable to be leſs affected to the things of God, for the ſake of any worldly buſineſs, than for the indulgence of our pride, or any other ſinful paſſion: every buſineſs of life being equally trifling, when compared with the one thing needful.

III. Men of ſerious buſineſs indeed generally cenſure thoſe, who trifle away their time in vain and impertinent pleaſures.

But they don't conſider that their own employments alſo are as vain as vanity itſelf: they don't conſider that any buſineſs or employment, if it has got hold of the heart, renders men as vain and odious in the ſight of God, as any ſenſual gratification.

They may call it an *honeſt care*, a *wiſe induſtry*, or by any other plauſible name. But it is a wiſdom which can no more recommend itſelf to the eyes of God than the wiſdom of an *epicure*.

* For it ſhews as wrong a turn of mind, and as great a contempt of the true good, to neglect *any* degrees of piety for the ſake of buſineſs, as for any the moſt trifling pleaſures of life.

IV. *The wiſdom of this world indeed gives an importance and air of greatneſs to ſeveral ways of life, and ridicules others as vain and contemptible, which differ only in their kind of vanity. But the wiſdom from above condemns all labour as equally fruitleſs, which hinders our labouring after everlaſting life. For what can it ſignify whether a man forgets God in his *farm*, or in a *ſhop*, or at a *gaming table?* The world is full as important in its *pleaſures* as in its *cares*; there is no more wiſdom in the one than in the other. And the man who, by the *cares* and *buſineſs* of the world is made leſs affected to the things of God, is no wiſer than he who takes his delight in running *foxes* and *hares* out of breath.

For there is no wiſdom in any thing but religion. Nor is any way of life leſs vain than another, but as it is made ſerviceable to piety, and conſpires with the deſigns of religion, to raiſe mankind to a participation and enjoyment of the divine nature.

V. Let thoſe who are not at all aſhamed to be devoted to the cares and buſineſs of the world, conſider thoſe ſtates of life, which they own to be vain and fooliſh, and contrary to religion.

Some people have no other *care*, than how to give their *palate* freſh pleaſure, and enlarge the happineſs of *taſting*.

Others live to no other purpoſe, than to breed *dogs*, and attend the ſports of the field.

Men

Men of ſober buſineſs, who ſeem to act the grave part of life, generally condemn theſe ways of life.

But why are they to be condemned? Produce but the true reaſon why any of theſe are vain and ſinful, and the ſame reaſon will conclude againſt every way of life which is not wholly devoted to God.

VI. Let the man who is deep in worldly buſineſs, but ſhew the vanity and ſhame of a life devoted to *pleaſures*, and the ſame reaſons will ſhew the vanity and ſhame of a life filled with worldly *cares*. So that whoſoever can condemn ſenſuality, ambition, or any way of life upon the principles of reaſon and religion, carries his own condemnation within his own breaſt, unleſs his life be entirely devoted to God.

VII. It is granted that ſome cares are made neceſſary by the neceſſities of nature. And the ſame alſo may be obſerved of ſome pleaſures, as the pleaſures of eating, drinking and reſt. But if reaſon and religion do not limit theſe *pleaſures* by the neceſſities of nature, we fall from rational creatures into drones, ſots, gluttons, and epicures.

* In like manner our *care* after ſome worldly things is neceſſary. But if this care is not bounded by the juſt wants of nature, if it wanders into unneceſſary purſuits, and fills the mind with falſe

desires and cravings; if it wants to add an imaginary splendour to the plain demands of nature, it is vain and irregular; it is the care of an *epicure*, a longing for *sauces* and *ragous*, and corrupts the soul like any other sensual indulgence.

For this reason our Lord points so many of his doctrines at the common allowed employments of life, to teach us, that they may employ our minds as falsely and dangerously as any trifles whatever.

He teaches us, that even the necessaries of life should be sought with a kind of indifference, that so our souls may be truly sensible of greater wants, and disposed to hunger and thirst after enjoyments that will make us happy for ever.

VIII. But how unlike are Christians to Christianity! It commands us to *take no thought, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink?* Yet Christians are restless and laborious, till they can eat in *plate*.

It commands us to be indifferent about raiment. But Christians are full of care and concern, to be *cloathed in purple and fine linen*. It enjoins us to *take no thought for the morrow*. Yet Christians think they have lived in vain, if they don't *leave estates* at their death. And these call themselves disciples of that Lord, who saith, *He that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple*.

IX. It

IX. It must not be said that these doctrines are not plainly enough taught in scripture, because the lives and behaviour of Christians are so contrary to them. For if the lives of Christians might be alledged against the doctrines of scripture, none of them would have lasted to this day.

It is one of the ten commandments, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.* And our Saviour has forbid swearing, yea, in the most solemn manner. Yet where more swearing than among Christians, and among such Christians as would think it hard to be reckoned a reproach to the Christian name?

The scripture says of Christians, that they are born of God, and *have overcome the world.* Can they then be reckoned of that number, who have not so much as overcome that flagrant sin, to which they have no temptation in nature?

Well therefore may the doctrines of heavenly-mindedness, and contempt of the world be disregarded, since they run counter to all the corruptions of flesh and blood, to all the pride and vanity of our nature.

X. But let those who are startled at these doctrines, deal faithfully with their own hearts, and ask themselves whether they should not have had the same dislike to them, had they lived in our Saviour's days? Or whether they can find any one reason, why they should have been so

ſpiritual and heavenly then, which is not as good and as ſtrong a reaſon for their being as ſpiritual and heavenly now?

* Hath heaven or earth ſuffered any change ſince that time? Is the world become now more worth our notice, or heavenly treaſure of leſs value than it was then? Or have we had another Saviour ſince, that has compounded things with this world, and helped us to an eaſier way to the next?

Yet, if an *apoſtle* was to raiſe from the dead, calling rich and great men to theſe doctrines, they would drive their coaches from ſuch a preacher, rather than be ſaved at ſuch a price.

XI. To ſet this great truth in a ſtill clearer light, I will appeal a little even to the imagination of the reader.

Let it be ſuppoſed, that rich men are now *enjoying* their riches, and taking all the uſual delights of plenty; that they are labouring for the meat that periſheth, contriving ſcenes of pleaſure, and ſpending their eſtates in proud expences.

After this ſuppoſition let it be imagined, that we ſaw the Holy Jeſus, who had not where to lay his head, with his twelve apoſtles, that had left all to follow him. Let us imagine, that we heard him call all the world, to take up the croſs and follow him, promiſing, a treaſure in heaven to ſuch as would quit all for his ſake, and rejecting all that would not comply therewith: denouncing

nouncing woe and eternal death to all that lived in fulneſs, pomp and worldly delights. Let it be imagined, that we heard him commanding his diſciples, to *take no thought, ſaying, What ſhall we eat, or what ſhall we drink, or wherewithal ſhall we be cloathed?* And giving this reaſon for it, *After all theſe things do the Gentiles ſeek.*

Let it be imagined, that we ſaw the firſt Chriſtians taking up the croſs, renouncing the world, and *counting all things but dung that they might win Chriſt.*

I do not now ſo immediately appeal to the *judgment* or *reaſon* of the reader. I leave it even with his imagination, that wild faculty, to determine, whether it be poſſible for theſe two different ſorts of men, to be true diſciples of the ſame Lord?

XII. * To proceed; Let us ſuppoſe that a rich man was to put up ſuch a prayer as this to God:

" O Lord, I thy ſinful creature, whom thou haſt called to a lively hope of glory in Chriſt Jeſus, beg of thee to grant me a *thouſand* times more riches than I *need*, that I may be able to gratify myſelf and family in the delights of eating and drinking, ſtate and grandeur. Grant that as the little ſpan of life wears out, I may abound more and more in wealth; and that I may ſee and perceive all the beſt and ſureſt ways of growing richer than any of my neighbours.

This I humbly and fervently beg, in the name, *&c.*"

Such a prayer as this ſhould have had no place in this treatiſe; but in hope that proportionably as it offends the *ear*, it may amend the *heart*.

XIII. There is no one, I believe, but would be aſhamed to put up ſuch a prayer as this to God. Yet let it be well obſerved, that all are of the temper of this prayer, but thoſe who have renounced the world.

We need not go among villains, and people of ſcandalous characters, to find thoſe who deſire a *thouſand times* more than they want, who have an eagerneſs to be every day richer and richer, who catch at ſtill new ways of gain; and ſcarce think any thing enough, except it equals or exceeds the eſtate of their neighbours.

I beg of ſuch that they would heartily condemn the profane and unchriſtian ſpirit of the foregoing prayer, and that they would ſatisfy themſelves, nothing can be more odious and contrary to religion.

But let them be aſſured alſo of this, that the ſame things which make an unchriſtian prayer, make an unchriſtian life.

For the reaſon why theſe things appear ſo odious in a prayer, is becauſe they are ſo contrary to the ſpirit of religion. But is it not as bad to *live* contrary to the ſpirit of religion, as to *pray* contrary to it?

At

At leaſt, muſt not that way of life be highly blameable, which is ſo ſhocking when put into the form of a prayer?

XIV. Need we any other conviction, that this manner of life is contrary to the ſpirit of Chriſtianity, than this, that the praying according to it in Chriſt's name, comes near to blaſphemy?

Let it be conſidered how we ſhould abominate a perſon, whom we knew to uſe ſuch a prayer: and let that teach us, how abominable ſuch a life muſt appear in the eyes of God! And with this addition of folly, that we call the prayer *profane*, but think the life that anſwers to it to be *Chriſtian*.

From all this it is plain, that the preſent followers of Jeſus Chriſt, have no more to do with worldly enjoyments, than thoſe he choſe while he himſelf was on earth; and that we are to have the ſame heavenly devotion to God, the ſame affection, as any of thoſe he converſed with in the days of his fleſh.

XV. Yet notwithſtanding the ſcriptures are ſo expreſs, men will not give up their pre-conceived opinions.

It will ſtill be aſked, Where can be the harm of getting or enjoying an eſtate?

Whether it be not a commendable thing, to *provide an eſtate* for one's family?

And what people of birth and fortune are to do,

with themſelves, if they are not to *live up to* their eſtates and qualities?

To the firſt queſtion let it be anſwered, *Take no thought, ſaying, what ſhall we eat, or what ſhall we drink, or wherewithal ſhall we be cloathed? For after all theſe things do the Gentiles ſeek.*

Now, if to be careful and thoughtful, even about the neceſſaries of life, be a care that is here forbidden, and that becauſe it is ſuch a care as only becomes Heathens; ſurely to be careful and thoughtful how to raiſe an eſtate, and enrich one's family, is a care that is ſufficiently forbidden in Chriſtians. And he that can yet think it lawful, to make this the care and deſign of his life, is too blind to be convinced by arguments. Our Saviour ſaith, *Labour not for the meat that periſheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlaſting life.* He commands us not to *lay up for ourſelves treaſures on earth*; he aſſures us that we *cannot ſerve* God *and mammon.*

Now theſe places have no meaning, if it is ſtill lawful for Chriſtians to heap up treaſures, to labour for eſtates, and purſue deſigns of enriching their families.

XVI. I know it is eaſy to evade the force of theſe texts, and to make plauſible harangues, upon the innocency of labouring to be rich, and the conſiſtency of ſerving God and mammon.

I don't queſtion but the rich young man in the goſpel could have made a very good apology for himſelf,

himſelf, and have ſhewn how reaſonable and innocent a thing it was, for ſo good and ſo young a man to *enjoy* an eſtate.

The *rich man* in torments could have alledged how *much good* he did with his fortune; how many *trades* he encouraged with his *purple* and *fine linen*, and faring *ſumptuouſly* every day; and how he conformed to the *ends of ſociety*, by ſo ſpending his eſtate.

XVII. * But ſtill the word of God ſhall not paſs away. *Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. For they who will be rich fall into a temptation and a ſnare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which drown men in deſtruction and perdition.* 1 Tim. vi. 8.

We may, perhaps, by ſome acuteneſs of reaſoning, find out, that this ſtill leaves us at our liberty, whether we will labour to be rich or not: that notwithſtanding what the apoſtle ſays, of a *ſnare*, a *temptation*, and *fooliſh luſts*, yet we can purſue the means and deſire the happineſs of riches, without any danger to our virtue.

But if ſo, we are as prudent as thoſe Chriſtians, who think they can ſecure their virtue without watching and prayer, tho' our Saviour has ſaid, *Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.*

And he that neglects watching and prayer, tho' the appointed means of avoiding temptation, lives as much according to ſcripture, as he that is

careful and desirous of riches, tho' the declared occasions of *sin*, *snares* and *destruction*.

XVIII. If we could submit to the plain doctrines of scripture, it would never be asked what people of *fortune* are to do with themselves, if they are not to live up to the splendour and plenty of their estates?

The rich man in the gospel was a *ruler*, a *young* man, and a *good* man: if therefore there are any of his rank who are neither young nor good, it can hardly be thought, they have less to do to inherit eternal life.

And as for those who, like him, have kept the commandments of God from their youth, I dare not tell them, that they are not under a necessity of offering all their wealth to God, and of making their estates, however acquired, not the support of vain indulgences, but the relief of their brethren.

XIX. Suppose great people, by means of their wealth, could throw themselves into a *deep sleep* of pleasant dreams, which would last till death awaked them, would any one think it lawful for them to make such use of their riches?

And yet he that had done nothing but sleep and dream to the time of his death, might as well say, that he had been working out his salvation with fear and trembling, as he that has been

been living in luxury, ſplendour, and ſenſual gratifications.

The goſpel has made no exception for *dignity* of birth, or difference in *fortune*; but has appointed the ſame *ſtraight* gate, the common paſſage for all perſons to enter into glory.

The diſtinctions of civil life have their uſe; but if any one thinks he may be leſs devoted to God, leſs afraid of the corruptions of pleaſure and pride, becauſe he is born of a rich family, he is as much miſtaken as he that fancies he has a privilege to ſteal, becauſe he was born of a Father that was poor.

XX. If the rich or great man can find out a courſe of pleaſures, that ſupport no wrong turn of mind, an indulgence which does not gratify ſenſuality, entertainments which feed no vain paſſions: if they can find out ſuch inſtances of ſplendour and greatneſs, as ſhew they love God with all their hearts, and as gratify neither *the luſt of the fleſh*, *the luſt of the eye*, nor *the pride of life*, religion has no command againſt ſuch enjoyments.

But if this cannot be done, then the rich have no more permiſſion to live in vain indulgences than the poor have to ſteal.

* And let it be always remembered, that if any diſtinction of life makes men forget that ſin is their only baſeneſs, and holineſs their only honour; if any condition makes them leſs diſpoſed

ed to imitate the low, humble eſtate of their ſuffering Maſter; inſtead of being any real advantage, it is their curſe, their ſnare and deſtruction.

XXI. I know it will ſtill be objected, that a man is not neceſſarily proud, becauſe he lives in ſhew and figure, any more than another is neceſſarily humble, becauſe he lives in a low eſtate.

It is granted, that men may be of a temper contrary to the eſtate in which they live. But this is only true, of ſuch as are in any ſtate by force, and contrary to their deſires and endeavours.

A man in a low eſtate may be proud, becauſe he is in ſuch a ſtate by force; and is uneaſy till he can raiſe himſelf out of it. If the ſame is true of him that lives in figure and pomp, that he is in this ſtate by force, and is reſtleſs till he can lay it all aſide, then we grant he may be humble.

But nothing is weaker than to ſay, becauſe a man may *be* in a low eſtate *per force*, without lowlineſs of mind, therefore another may *chuſe to live* in all the height of grandeur and vanity, without any height or vanity of mind.

A man may be an epicure in his temper, tho' he is forced to live upon bread and water. But will you therefore ſay, another who lives on all

ſorts

ſorts of dainties, and that by choice, may be no epicure?

If therefore they that live in pomp and ſhew, live therein out of choice, and are not willing to live otherwiſe, we muſt talk nonſenſe if we do not ſay their minds are as vain as the vanity of their ſtate.

XXII. The neceſſity of renouncing the world, in whatever ſtate of life we are, may be yet farther proved from thoſe divine tempers which Chriſtianity requires.

Chriſtians are to love God with all their heart, with all their ſoul, with all their mind, and with all their ſtrength.

Now it is abſolutely impoſſible we ſhould do this, unleſs we have renounced the world.

A man that has his head and his heart full of worldly concerns, can no more love God with all his ſtrength, than a man, who has his eyes on the ground, can be looking towards heaven with all the ſtrength of his ſight.

XXIII. It is certain, that we unavoidably love every thing in proportion as it appears to be our happineſs: if it appears to be half our happineſs, it will neceſſarily have half the ſtrength of our love: and if it appears to be all our happineſs, we ſhall love it with all our ſtrength.

The Chriſtian religion therefore, which requires the whole ſtrength of our nature to love God,

God, lays a juſt foundation in requiring us abſolutely to renounce the happineſs of the world; ſeeing it is impoſſible to have two happineſſes, and but one love.

And indeed what can be more ridiculous than to fancy, that a man who is taken up with the enjoyments of the world, is at the ſame time loving God with all his ſoul and with all his ſtrength?

Is it not as abſurd as to ſuppoſe that a man, who is devoted to, and taken up with the ſports of the field, is at the ſame time contemplating mathematical ſpeculations, with the whole ardour of his mind?

XXIV. Another duty which proves the abſolute neceſſity of thus renouncing the world, is, The love of our neighbour.

Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf: if a man would know what this implies, let him look impartially into his own heart, and ſee what it is that he wiſhes to himſelf. Then let him turn all the ſame wiſhes to his neighbour, and he will feel the juſt meaſure of his duty.

This will alſo teach him, that the true love of his neighbour is as inconſiſtent with the love of the world, as duelling is inconſiſtent with meekneſs and the forgiveneſs of injuries.

XXV. * This love is a temper that ſuits only ſuch beings as have *one common undivided happi-*

neſs,

neſs, wherein they cannot be rivals to one another. Now this is the ſtate of all Chriſtians, who have as truly *one common* happineſs as they have *one common* God. But if we put ourſelves out of this ſtate, and ſeek for happineſs in the enjoyments of this life, we are as incapable of this love, as *wolves* and *bears* that live upon prey.

One *common undivided* happineſs, being the only poſſible foundation for this love, if we ſeek any other happineſs, if we don't renounce all other pretenſions, we cannot keep clear of ſuch tempers as are utterly inconſiſtent with the loving our neighbour as ourſelves.

But when we are governed by a happineſs wherein none can make himſelf our rival, it will be no harder to love all men as ourſelves, than to wiſh them the enjoyment of the ſame light, or the common air: which being goods that may be equally enjoyed by all, are not the occaſions of envy.

XXVI. * It is plain our Saviour intended this brotherly love, to be the governing principle of our lives. But it cannot be ſo, unleſs we are content to make no more of this world, than a ſupply of our neceſſities, and to look for *one only* happineſs in the enjoyment of God.

I don't appeal to niggards and worldlings, to the proud and ambitious: let thoſe who think themſelves *moderate* in their worldly deſires and enjoyments,

enjoyments, deal faithfully with themſelves and ſee whether their proſecution of their worldly affairs, permits them to love all men as themſelves.

Perhaps they have not thoſe bitter envyings and hatreds to which ambitious worldlings are ſubject. But ſtill they have as certainly, in their degree, and in proportion to their love of the world, their envyings and hatreds, and want of ſincere love, as other men.

XXVII. For a further proof of this, we need only look into the world, and ſee the ſpirit that appears among almoſt all Chriſtians.

We need not go to wicked and looſe people. Let us go into any *virtuous* family, and we ſhall find it has its particular *friendſhips* and *hatreds*, its *envyings* and *evil ſpeakings*, and all founded in the intereſts of the world.

And this neceſſarily ſprings from hence, that all Chriſtians are buſy in attending to their worldly intereſts, intending only to keep clear of diſhoneſt practices: that is, they uſe the world as far as honeſt *Heathens* or *Jews* would do, and conſequently have ſuch tempers as *Jews* and *Heathens* have.

For it is not only cheating and diſhoneſty, but the bare deſire of worldly things, and the placing happineſs in them, that lays the foundation of all theſe unchriſtian tempers; and divides Chriſtians into more parties than there are families among them.

So

So that it is purely the engaging ſo far in the world as ſober Chriſtians do: it is their falſe ſatisfaction in ſo many things that they ought to renounce; it is their being too much alive to the world, that makes all, even thoſe who are called religious, ſubject to tempers ſo contrary to the love of their neighbour.

Let this therefore teach us that we muſt renounce the world, if we would live and love like Chriſtians.

XXVIII. By renouncing the world, I do not mean, retiring into a cloiſter. This would be like laying aſide all uſe of cloaths, to avoid the vanity of dreſs.

There is a reaſonable uſe of the world, which is as lawful as it is to eat and drink.

We may buy and ſell; we may labour; we may provide for ourſelves and our families; that is, ſo far as is needful for life and godlineſs. But farther we may not go.

The firſt ſtep our deſires take beyond things of neceſſity, ranks us among worldlings, and raiſes in our minds all thoſe tempers, which diſturb the minds of worldly men.

XXIX. You think yourſelf conformable to Chriſtianity, becauſe you are *moderate* in your deſires. You don't deſire a large eſtate; you deſire only a *little* finery, a *little* ſtate, and to have things genteel about you.

Imagine now, that what you ſay, of *moderate* deſires, and *little fineries*, had been ſaid to our bleſſed

bleſſed Saviour when he was upon earth, calling men to renounce the world and deny themſelves.

Your own conſcience tells you, he would have rebuked the author of ſuch a pretence with as much indignation as he rebuked *Peter*, *Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God.*

Now the ſpirit of Chriſtianity is the ſame ſpirit that was in Chriſt when he was upon earth. And if we have reaſon to think that ſuch a pretence would have been ſeverely condemned by Chriſt, we have the ſame reaſon to be ſure, it is as ſeverely condemned by Chriſtianity.

XXX. Had our bleſſed Saviour a little before he left the world, given *eſtates* to his apoſtles, with a permiſſion for them to enjoy *little fineries*, and a *moderate ſtate* in a *genteel* manner, he had undone all that he had ſaid of the contempt of the world, and heavenly-mindedneſs. Such a permiſſion had been a contradiction to the main doctrines which he had taught.

Had the apoſtles lived in a *little ſtate*, and in *moderate* worldly delights, how could they have ſaid, *the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world?*

And how blind and weak muſt we be, if we can think that we *may* live in a ſpirit and temper, which could not poſſibly be the ſpirit and temper of Chriſt and his apoſtles?

XXXI. * Another

XXXI. * Another pretence for worldly care and labour after riches, is to provide for our families.

You want to leave fortunes to your children, that they may have their ſhare in the *figure* and *ſhew* of the world. Now conſider, do you do this on principles of religion, as the beſt thing you can do, either for yourſelf or them?

Can you then be ſaid, to have choſen the *one thing needful* for yourſelf, or the *one thing needful* for them, who take ſuch care to put them in a ſtate of life, that is a *ſnare* and a *temptation*, and the moſt likely of all others, to fill their minds with *fooliſh and hurtful luſts?*

Is it your kindneſs toward them that puts you upon this labour? Conſider therefore what this kindneſs is founded upon? Perhaps it is ſuch a kindneſs as when *tender* mothers carry their daughters to *plays* and *balls:* ſuch a kindneſs as when *indulgent* fathers ſupport their ſons in all the expence of their follies. Such *kind* parents may more properly be called the *betrayers* and *murderers* of their children.

You love your children, and therefore you would have them rich. It is ſaid of our bleſſed Saviour, that he loved the *young rich* man that came unto him, and therefore he bid him *ſell all* that he had. What a contrariety is here? The love which dwelleth in you, is as contrary to the love which dwelt in Chriſt as darkneſs is to light.

We

We have our Saviour's expreſs command, to love one another, *as he loved us.* And can you think you are following this love, when you are giving thoſe things to your children, which he took away from his friends, and which he could not poſſibly have given them without contradicting the greateſt part of his doctrines?

XXXII. *But ſuppoſe you ſucceed in your deſigns, and leave your children rich, what muſt you ſay to them when you are dying? Will you then tell them that you have the ſame opinion of the value of riches you ever had; that you feel the pleaſure of remembring how much thought and care you have taken to acquire them? Will you tell them that you have provided for their eaſe and ſoftneſs, their pleaſure and indulgence and figure in the world; and that they cannot do better than to eat and drink and take their fill of ſuch enjoyments as riches afford? This would be dying like an *Atheiſt.*

If you would die like a Chriſtian, muſt you not endeavour to fill their minds with your dying thoughts? Muſt you not tell them that very ſoon the world will ſignify no more to them than it does to you? And that there is a *vanity*, a *littleneſs* in the things of this life, which only dying men feel as they ought?

Will you not tell them, that all your own failings, the irregularity of your life, the folly of your tempers, and your failure of Chriſtian perfection,

perfection, has been owing to wrong opinions of the value of worldly things? And that if you had always seen the world in the same light that you see it now, your life had been devoted to God, and you would have lived in all those holy tempers and heavenly affections in which you now desire to die?

Will you not tell them, that riches spent upon ourselves, either in the pleasures of *ease* and *indulgence*, in the vanity of dress, or in state and grandeur, are the bane and destruction of our souls, making us blindly content with *dreams* of happiness, till death awakes us into *real* misery?

From all this therefore it appears, that your kindness for your children is so far from being a good reason why you should so carefully labour to leave them rich, and in the enjoyment of the state and shew of the world; that if you die in a spirit of piety, if you love them as Christ loved his disciples, your kindness will oblige you to exhort them to renounce all such enjoyment of riches, as is contrary to those holy tempers and that heavenly affection which you now find to be the only good and happiness of human nature.

CHAP. III.

CHRISTIANITY calleth all men to a state of self-denial and mortification.

I. It

I. It would be ſtrange to ſuppoſe, that mankind were redeemed by the ſufferings of the Son of God, to live in eaſe and ſoftneſs themſelves, without any ſuffering or croſs at all!

Are we not all to die? Does God then unmake and daſh our very form into pieces; and can we think that a life of pleaſure and ſelf-indulgence can become us under ſuch a ſentence?

II. * *If any man will come after me*, ſaith Chriſt, *let him deny himſelf, take up his croſs daily, and follow me.*

To ſhew that this belongs to all Chriſtians, St. *Luke* ſaith, *He ſaid unto them* All: St. *Mark* hath it thus; *and when he had called the people unto him, with his diſciples alſo, he ſaid unto them.*

Let us now ſuppoſe that Chriſtian churches are full of *fine, gay* people, who ſpend their time in all the pleaſures and indulgences which the ſpirit of the world can invent.

Can it be ſaid of ſuch, that they are *denying themſelves, and taking up their croſs daily?* May they not with as much regard to truth be ſaid, to live *in ſackcloth and aſhes?* Or can they who live in all the ſcenes of pleaſure be ſaid, to be *working out their ſalvation with fear and trembling?* May they not as juſtly be ſaid, to be walking bare-foot to *Jeruſalem?*

III. Several inſtances of this ſelf-denial and daily croſs, are to be ſeen in the following words.

Ye

Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I ſay unto you, that you reſiſt not evil; but whoſoever will ſmite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other alſo; and if any man will ſue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak alſo: and whoſoever ſhall compell thee to go with him a mile, go with him twain.

We are to deny ourſelves then in not demanding *an eye for an eye, or a tooth for a tooth.* We are to take up our daily croſs, by *turning our cheek* to the ſmiter, and ſuffering ſuch ill uſage as we could prevent by reſiſtance.

We are to take up the croſs of one injury after another, rather than revenge ourſelves.

The words that deliver this doctrine are ſo plain and expreſs, that they need no illuſtration: And it is as plain, that they equally belong to all Chriſtians of all ages. The manner of our Saviour's delivering them, puts it out of all queſtion, that theſe were to be the perpetual marks of his followers.

Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid, an eye for an eye, &c. But I ſay unto you that ye reſiſt not evil.

It was not poſſible for our Lord to expreſs himſelf in a more authoritative manner, or to ſhew us more plainly, that he was here acting as the great lawgiver of Chriſtians, and delivering perpetual laws to all his diſciples. Nor is it poſſible for any one to evade the literal meaning of theſe

doctrines, but by such a way as must destroy the sense of any other part of scripture.

IV. If it could be shewn that we are not obliged by the plain doctrine of these passages, it might as well be shewn that the next doctrine, *But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you*, does not oblige us in the plain and literal sense of the words.

For both the passages are supported by the same authority expressed in the same manner, *I say unto you.* These virtues are likewise necessary to one another: we cannot thus love and do good to our enemy, unless we are thus patient under sufferings, and deny ourselves all instances of anger and resentment at them.

V. If these doctrines seem grievous, they can only seem so to such as have wrong notions of human life.

Too many imagine this life to be something that is valuable for its own goods; and look upon religion as something that is added to it, to make a worldly life more easy, regular and happy: And so embrace religion only as it complies with the ease and order of that way of life in which they live.

Our Saviour has fully confuted this opinion, by teaching us, that there is but *one thing needful.* If then we can take his word, the grievousness of self-denial is struck off at once.

For

For what though meekneſs and patience may make us ſufferers; yet if by ſuch ſufferings we loſe only ſuch things as are *not needful* for us, where is any ground for complaint?

VI. But farther, ſuch ſufferings not only do us no real hurt, but they are bleſſings and matter of ſolid joy.

Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall revile you and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil of you falſly for my ſake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven.

Chriſt does not comfort us in this, as if it were an *hard* or *melancholy* ſtate, which we *muſt* bear, becauſe it is made eaſier by patience. But he looks at it in quite another view, not as needing comfort, but affording matter of congratulation.

What Chriſtians then are they, who reckon thoſe things among the hardſhips of religion, which Chriſt recommends to us as reaſons of *rejoicing*, yea of being *exceeding glad?*

VII. The whole of the matter is this: if our ſufferings, our injuries or hardſhips be ſuch as we undergo, becauſe we dare not depart from that meekneſs and patience, and charity, which Chriſt hath taught; becauſe we had rather love our enemies than be revenged on them; rather ſuffer like Chriſt, and be full of his Spirit, than

avoid ſufferings by a contrary temper; ſuch ſufferings are our greateſt gains.

Now, be theſe ſufferings what they will, if they make us more like Chriſt, they have done more for us than all the proſperity in the world can do. And he that defends himſelf at the expence of any temper, that was the temper of Chriſt, has done himſelf an injury greater than the moſt powerful of his enemies can bring upon him.

And all this turns on one point, that there is but *one thing needful*, the ſalvation of our ſouls. It is this that changes the nature of all human things, and makes every thing good or evil, only ſo far as it promotes or hinders this *one end* of life. The ſalvation of the world is the only happineſs of the world: and he that has ſecured his ſhare in that, has ſecured to himſelf all the joy and gladneſs that can befal human nature.

A Chriſtian therefore that is not content with ſalvation, that would add a worldly joy to the great things of religion, is more ſenſeleſs than a man that would not be content to be ſaved from a *ſhipwreck*, unleſs he was carried off upon a *cedar plank*.

VIII. Before I proceed to other inſtances of ſelf-denial, it may be proper to ſhew the reaſonableneſs of it.

God is reaſon and wiſdom itſelf. As ſure therefore as there is a God, ſo ſure it is that a religion

religion from God has only reaſonable commands. God can only will that reaſonable creatures ſhould be more reaſonable, more perfect and like himſelf: and conſequently can enjoin no duties but ſuch as have this tendency; all his commands are founded on the neceſſities of our natures, and are only ſo many inſtructions to become more happy than we could be without them.

IX. * Now let us apply this. If a perſon were to walk upon a *rope* acroſs ſome great river, and he was bid to deny himſelf the pleaſure of walking in *ſilver ſhoes*, or looking about at the beauty of the waves, or liſtening to the noiſe of ſailors: if he was commanded to deny himſelf the advantage of *fiſhing* by the way, would there be any thing unreaſonable in ſuch ſelf-denial?

Straight is the gate, ſaith our Lord, and *narrow is the way that leadeth unto life*. Now, if Chriſtians are to walk in a narrow way that leadeth to eternal life, it muſt be the part of a Chriſtian to deny himſelf all thoſe things which may ſtop him in, or lead him out of this narrow way. And if they think that pleaſing their ſenſes, and worldly indulgences, are conſiſtent with their keeping in this narrow way, they think as reaſonably as if the man upon the *rope* ſhould think that he might ſafely uſe *ſilver ſhoes*, or ſtop in his way to *catch fiſh*.

X. The plain caſe is this: Chriſtians are called from a ſtate of ſin and diſorder, to a ſtate of holineſs and reſemblance of the divine nature. If therefore there are any things or ways of life, that corrupt our minds, ſupport our vanity, increaſe the diſorder of our ſouls, or nouriſh ſinful affections; all theſe are as neceſſarily to be avoided, as it is neceſſary to be holy.

If indeed (to inſtance in one point only) there are no indulgences in *eating*, that do us harm, then it might be ſaid, *faſting* is of no uſe: But if there are, if all indulgences of this ſort, inſlave the ſoul, and give it a ſenſual taſte, then we are as much obliged to abſtain from what does us this harm, as we are obliged to *pray* for any thing which can do us good.

XI. Eating and drinking are the common ſupports of life. But as they are the ſupports of a corrupt life, the nouriſhment of a diſordered body that weighs down the ſoul; whoſe appetites are in a ſtate of enmity with the life and purity of the ſoul; it is neceſſary that we take care ſo to ſupport the life of the body, as not to occaſion the ſickneſs and death of the ſoul.

The difference between the ſame man full and faſting, is often almoſt the difference of two perſons; a man that in the morning finds himſelf fit for any meditation, is after a full meal changed into another creature, fit only for idle amuſements or the yawnings of an animal.

He

He has not only created a dulneſs in his ſoul, but has perverted its taſte: for he can be pleaſed with a *romance* or *impertinent* hiſtory, while he has no reliſh for a book of devotion.

This ſhews, that *faſting* has a nearer relation to all *religious* tempers than is generally thought; and that full feeding not only dulls the mind, but more particularly gives it a dulneſs towards the things of religion.

XII. * Indeed every indulgence of the body in eating and drinking, is adding to its power over the ſoul.

A man that makes every day a day of *full* and *chearful* meals, will by degrees make the happineſs of every day depend upon it, and conſider every thing with regard to it.

He will go to *church* or ſtay at home, as it ſuits with his *dinner*, and not ſcruple to tell you, that he generally eats too heartily to go to afternoon ſervice.

Now ſuch people are under a worſe diſorder than the *jaundice*, and have their ſight more perverted than he that ſees all things *yellow*.

For what diſcernment have they, who have more taſte for the preparations of the *kitchen*, than for the comforts of the houſe of God: who chuſe rather to make themſelves *unfit* for divine ſervice, than to baulk the pleaſure of a *full meal?*

Can they think they have the Spirit of Chriſt who are thus enſlaved to *gluttony?* Or can they be ſaid, to have forſaken all to follow him, who will not ſo much as forſake *half a meal* for the worſhip of God?

XIII. I know it will be thought too ſevere to call that *gluttony*, becauſe it is the practice of numbers of people of *worth* and *reputation*. But I hope they will turn their diſlike of the name into a diſlike of the thing: for 'tis as certainly *gluttony* as picking of pockets is ſtealing.

The ſin of gluttony is the ſin of over-eating. Now this may be difficult to ſtate exactly in ſome caſes. But he that owns he eats ſo much as renders him *indiſpoſed* for the public worſhip of God, has determined againſt himſelf, and put his own caſe out of all queſtion.

Men may fancy, they are only guilty of *gluttony*, who eat till they *ſurfeit* their bodies. They may think thoſe only guilty of *drunkenneſs*, who drink till they have loſt their ſenſes. But there is a much ſurer rule to go by; *whether ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of* God. All therefore in eating and drinking that is not to the glory of God, is offered to ſomething that is not the glory of God; it is offered to the corruption and ſenſuality of our natures. It is the ſin of intemperance; and is indevotion too, when indulged at a time that keeps us from the public worſhip of God.

XIV. * In-

XIV. * Indeed a conſtant courſe of full feeding is the death of the ſoul, and every day that is a day of ſuch happineſs, is a day loſt to religion.

When a man has rejoiced himſelf with full eating and drinking, he is like any other animal, diſpoſed only to *play* or *idleneſs*. He has no more feeling of ſin than he has of *hunger*, and can no more perceive himſelf to be a *miſerable fallen* creature, than he can perceive himſelf to be a *beggar*.

For this courſe of ſenſual enjoyments, is as contrary to a true ſenſe of ſin, as it is contrary to a ſtate of *beggary and want*; and a man in ſuch happineſs, can no more feel the *weight of ſin*, than he can feel himſelf in the *miſery of poverty*.

XV. I know ſome object, that faſting is not an *univerſal* duty; but fit for ſome particular caſes, and particular conſtitutions.

To this I anſwer, if by faſting you mean an entire abſtinence from food, for ſuch a ſpace of time, in this ſenſe it is not an univerſal duty.

But this is quite a wrong notion of it. For the faſting whereof I ſpeak is not any *fixed degree* of abſtinence from all food: but, ſuch an exerciſe of abſtinence and ſelf-denial as is proper to every one's particular ſtate.

Now in this ſenſe faſting is as conſtant and univerſal a duty as repentance.

For as repentance is an *univerſal* duty, becauſe the reaſon of it is common to all men; ſo is faſting, becauſe ſenſuality, and fleſhly luſts, is the *univerſal* corruption of all men.

It is no *fixed degree* of ſorrow that is the common repentance of all men. It is no *fixed form* or *length* or *hour* of prayer, that is the common devotion of all men. Yet are theſe *conſtant* and *univerſal* duties.

In like manner, though faſting be ſubject to all the ſame variations, yet is it a *conſtant* and *univerſal* duty.

XVI. * *Juſtus* is a grave, ſober man. He is very angry at thoſe who neglect faſting. He thinks they know nothing of religion.

But preſently after, *Juſtus* will tell you, that he never faſts but on *Good Friday*, and the 30th of *January*.

If *Juſtus* had lived before the murder of King *Charles*, he had had but one faſt in the year. Yet in all likelihood he would then have ſtood up for the *doctrine* of faſting.

If a man was to be angry at thoſe who neglect the ſervice of the church, as people that know nothing of religion, and then tell you, that he himſelf never goes thither but on *Good Friday*, and the 30th of *January*, you would ſay, that he knew nothing of the nature of church ſervice.

Now *Juſtus* ſhews the ſame ignorance of the nature of *faſting*. If

If prayer and repentance and the ſervice of the church, were not common acts of devotion, and neceſſary ways of worſhipping God, they would not be neceſſary on *Good Friday*.

In like manner, unleſs faſting was a common and neceſſary part of religion, it would neither be neceſſary nor acceptable on thoſe particular days. For it is not the day that makes the duty to be neceſſary. But the day happens to be a proper occaſion of exerciſing a neceſſary duty.

XVII. If *Juſtus* was to ſay, that he never *repents* but on thoſe public days, he might as eaſily defend himſelf as when he ſays, he only faſts but at thoſe times.

For, is there any benefit in faſting at thoſe times? Does it add any thing to your piety and devotion? Does it calm your mind and put you into a better ſtate for prayer, than when you take your uſual meals? If it has not ſomething of this effect, where is the uſe of it at any time? And if it has this effect, how comes it that you will have but one or two ſuch days in the year? Why will you not thus aſſiſt your devotions, thus calm your mind, thus raiſe your heart, 'till the *day* comes on which King *Charles* was murdered? Is not this like ſtaying till then before you repent?

XVIII. Farther; when the diſciples of our Lord could not caſt the evil ſpirit out of a man that was a *lunatic*, he not only tells them, it was

for want of faith, but alſo gives them a very important inſtruction in thoſe words, *Howbeit this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and faſting.* Matt. xvii. 21.

Now, does this look as if faſting were deſigned only for a day or two in the year? Is it ranked with prayer, as being equally prevalent with God? And is not this ſufficient to teach us, that we muſt think of faſting as we think of prayer; that it is a proper way of devotion, a right method of applying to God? And if that prayer is moſt prevailing which is attended with faſting, it is proof enough ſurely, that faſting is to be a common part of our devotion.

Is it powerful enough, by the bleſſing of God, to caſt out devils, and cure lunatics? And ſhall we neglect it, when we pray againſt the evil tempers which poſſeſs our hearts? Shall we not then pray to God in the moſt powerful prevailing manner that we can?

* If we were to faſt without praying, would not this be a way of worſhip of our own invention? And if we pray and neglect faſting, is it not equally chuſing a worſhip of our own? For he that has taught us the uſe and advantage of prayer, has alſo taught us the uſe and advantage of faſting. And has likewiſe joined them together, as having the ſame power with God.

XIX. * We may alſo obſerve, that the reaſon of ſelf-denial and abſtinence is perpetual, becauſe we

we are perpetually united to a body, that is more or leſs fit to join with the ſoul in acts of holineſs, according to the ſtate it is in.

It is therefore abſolutely neceſſary that we avoid every degree of indulgence, every kind of irregularity, that may make our bodies leſs *active* or leſs fit for the purpoſe of a holy life.

Chriſtian temperance is no more that which paſſes for temperance in the ſight of men, than Chriſtian charity is that which paſſes for charity in the world.

A worldly man may think himſelf temperate, when he only abſtains from ſuch exceſſes as may make him fitter to enjoy a healthful *ſenſuality*.

But Chriſtian temperance is of quite another kind, and for other ends. It is to keep the body in a ſtate of purity and ſubmiſſion, and to preſerve in the ſoul a divine and heavenly taſte.

XX. It is out of all queſtion, that there are ſome ſtates of body fitter for virtue than others.

This is as certain as that *gluttony* and *drunkenneſs* diſpoſe men to all ſorts of ſins, and give them a diſreliſh for all ſorts of holineſs. For as theſe vices have the utmoſt contrariety to religion, ſo every *approach* towards them is, in a certain degree, partaking of them.

A man that lives ſo as not to be called either a *glutton* or a *drunkard*, may yet be ſo near them,

them, as to partake of thoſe tempers which are the effects of *gluttony* and *drunkenneſs*.

* As a man may be vain and uncharitable, yet not ſo as to be remarkable for his vanity and uncharitableneſs, ſo he may be under the guilt and evil effects of eating and drinking, though not ſo as to be eſteemed either a glutton or intemperate.

* So that a wiſe Chriſtian will conſtantly practiſe ſuch abſtinence, as may not only ſecure him from ſenſuality in the ſight of the world, but as beſt ſuits with a body which is the holy habitation of a ſoul devoted to God.

XXI. St. *Paul* ſaith, *I therefore ſo run, not as uncertainly; ſo fight I, not as one that beateth the air. But I keep under my body, and bring it into ſubjection, leſt that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myſelf ſhould be a caſtaway.* 1 Cor. ix.

Let it be obſerved, that the apoſtle practiſed this ſelf-denial, not only as a good and adviſable thing, but as of the laſt neceſſity. It was not, as he was an *apoſtle*, and that he might be fitter for the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghoſt: but it was, to ſecure his ſalvation, and *leſt when he had preached to others, he ſhould himſelf be a caſtaway.*

* Let it be conſidered, that this apoſtle, who lived *in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions,*

perſecutions, in diſtreſſes for Chriſt's ſake, who was alſo full of *ſigns and wonders, and mighty deeds*, and who had been *caught up into the third heavens*; yet reckons all his virtues as inſecure, and his ſalvation in danger, without this conſtantly continued courſe of univerſal ſelf-denial. Nay he thought all his advancements in piety, without this, to be as vain a labour as *beating the air.*

So run I, ſays he, *not as uncertainly*; by which he plainly teacheth us, that he who does not thus run, who does not thus continually *keep the body under, does run uncertainly, and fighteth* to as little purpoſe as he *that beateth the air.*

An apoſtle preaching the goſpel with *ſigns and wonders*, in the midſt of diſtreſs and perſecution, thought his own ſalvation in danger, without this ſubjection of his body. And ſhall we think it ſafe to feed to the full, and indulge our bodies in eaſe and plenty?

XXII. * There are no truths more plainly delivered in ſcripture than theſe two, *the general corruption* of human nature, and the *abſolute neceſſity* of divine grace. Now theſe make the neceſſity of a continual ſelf-denial plain and obvious to the meaneſt capacity; and extend it to all thoſe things and enjoyments which either ſtrengthen the *corruption* of our nature, or *grieve the Holy Spirit of* God, and cauſe him to depart from us. Who-

Whoever reflects on these, will soon be convinced, that all those enjoyments are to be abstained from, which either support our natural corruption, or hinder the inspirations of the Holy Spirit.

He will find also, that this self-denial must extend itself to every day of our lives, unless he can find a day, which offers nothing suitable to the corruption of his nature, or nothing contrary to the good motions of the Holy Ghost.

XXIII. Most people acknowledge this in general: that we ought to avoid what strengthens our corruptions and *grieves* the Spirit of God: but then they think to abstain from gross sin is sufficient for this.

But let such consider, that a *dropsy* or a *gangrene*, is not only increased by drunkenness, but by every little indulgence that suits with it.

Now the corruption of our nature is an inbred distemper that possesses us in the manner of a dropsy or gangrene. If we give into notorious sins, it quite overcomes us, and we are straightway dead in sin.

* But tho' we keep clear of great offences, yet if we indulge ourselves in little things that suit with the corruption of our nature, we certainly nourish a slow death, and destroy ourselves by degrees.

Our self-denial therefore must be as *universal* as the means of our corruption. It is to last as long

long as our diſorder, and to extend itſelf to every thing that might increaſe it. And this for as plain a reaſon as a man in a dropſy is not only to abſtain from drunkenneſs, but from every indulgence that increaſes his diſorder.

XXIV. * Let it be farther conſidered, that the corruption of our nature is but faintly repreſented by comparing it to theſe diſtempers. For one in theſe diſtempers may have only ſome part affected; but the corruption of our nature is as extenſive as our nature. It is the corruption of every faculty and every power. It is blindneſs in our underſtandings; it is ſelf-love and perverſeneſs in our wills, intemperance in our appeties. It is anger, luſt, pride and revenge in our paſſions; it is falſeneſs, hypocriſy, malice and hatred in our hearts. Now all this, and far more than this, makes the miſerable corruption of human nature.

So that it is as neceſſary that our lives be a ſtate of *regimen*, contrary to this variety of diſorders, as it is neceſſary for a man under a complication of diſtempers, to obſerve a *courſe* of regularity.

For ſeeing all ill tempers are increaſed by indulgence, and the more we yield to any, the ſtronger it grows, 'tis plain we muſt practiſe as many ſorts of ſelf-denial as we have ill tempers to contend with.

XXV. * When

XXV. * When we ſpeak of ſelf-denial, we are apt to confine it to eating and drinking: but we ought to conſider, that theſe are the eaſieſt and ſmalleſt inſtances of it. Pride, vanity, ſelf-love, covetouſneſs, envy, and other inclinations of the like nature, call for a more conſtant and watchful ſelf-denial, than the appetites of hunger and thirſt.

* 'Till therefore our ſelf-denial is as univerſal as our corruption; 'till we deny ourſelves all degrees of vanity and folly, as earneſtly as we deny ourſelves all degrees of drunkenneſs; till we reject all ſorts of pride and envy, as we abhor all kinds of gluttony; till we watch and deny all irregular tempers, as we avoid all ſorts of ſenſuality, we can no more be ſaid to practiſe ſelf-denial, that he can be ſaid to be juſt, who only denies himſelf the liberty of ſtealing.

And till we do thus univerſally deny ourſelves, our lives will be a *ridiculous mixture* of I know not what; *ſober* and covetous, proud and *devout*, *temperate* and vain, *regular* in our forms of prayer, and irregular in our paſſions, circumſpect in *little modes* of behaviour, and careleſs of tempers the moſt eſſential to piety.

XXVI. A little attention to that great principle of *reaſon and religion*, that God is our only good, will convince us ſtill farther of the neceſſity of univerſal ſelf-denial.

For

For what can be a greater ſelf-denial, or more contradictory to all our natural ſentiments, than to live and govern ourſelves by a happineſs that is to be had in God alone? A happineſs which our ſenſes, our old guides, neither ſee, nor feel, nor taſte, nor perceive: a happineſs which gives us neither figure, nor dignity, nor power, nor glory, among one another?

Look at man in his natural ſtate, acting by the judgment of his ſenſes, following the motions of his nature; and you will ſee him acting as if the world was full of infinite ſorts of happineſs.

He has not only a thouſand imaginary pleaſures, but has found out as many vexations; all which ſhew, that he thinks *happineſs* is every where to be found. For no one is vexed at any thing, unleſs he thinks he is diſappointed of ſome poſſible happineſs.

A happineſs therefore in God alone, is the greateſt contradiction to all our natural tempers. Not only as it propoſes a good which our ſenſes cannot reliſh, but as it leads us from all thoſe imaginary enjoyments on which our ſenſes have fixed our hearts.

XXVII. If then we think of religion, without ſelf-denial, we know nothing at all of it. For its whole nature is, to direct us by a light and knowledge and wiſdom from God, which is all contrary to the darkneſs, ignorance and folly of our natures.

It is therefore altogether impoſſible for any man to enter into the ſpirit of religion, but by denying himſelf, by being diveſted of all his *natural tempers* and judgments, which have been formed by the blind motions of fleſh and blood, and ſtrengthened by the example and authority of the world. He cannot walk in the light of God, unleſs he reject the *dreams* of his ſenſes, and the *darkneſs* of worldly wiſdom.

* We may let our ſenſes tell us, what we are to *eat* and *drink*, or when we are to ſleep. We may let them teach us, how near we may draw to a *fire*, how great a *burden* we may carry, or into how deep a *water* we may go. In theſe things they are our proper guides.

But if we appeal to them to know the *true good* of man, or the proper happineſs of our rational nature; if we aſk them what *guilt* there is in ſin, or what *excellence* there is in piety; if we conſult them as guides in theſe matters, we act full as abſurdly as if we were to try to *hear* with our *eyes*, or to *ſee* with our *ears*.

XXVIII. * While we forget this, all our judgments of things are corrupted by the groſſneſs and errors of our ſenſes.

We judge of every thing in the ſame manner as the child judges of his *play things*. It is by our *ſenſes* alone we paſs the judgment, tho' we think we act with the *reaſon of man*.

The

The world is made up of *fine ſights*, ſports, ſhew and pageantry, which pleaſe and captivate the minds of men, becauſe men have ſtill the minds of children, and are juſt the ſame ſlaves to their ſenſes that children are.

As children and men ſee the ſame *colours* in things, ſo children and men feel the ſame ſenſible pleaſures, and are affected with external objects in the ſame manner.

But the misfortune is, that we laugh at the *little* pleaſures, *poor* deſigns, and *trifling* ſatisfactions of children; while at the ſame time the *wiſdom* and *greatneſs* of men, is viſibly taken up with the *ſame trifles*.

A *coach* and *ſix* and an *embroidered ſuit*, ſhall make a great *ſtateſman* as happy, as ever a *go-cart* and *feather* made a child.

Aſk a child, what he thinks he would do with a great ſum of money? Why, he would buy twenty *little horſes*, he would have twenty *fine coats*, ſee all *fine ſights*, and the like.

Now promiſe but a man a great eſtate, and you will raiſe all theſe ſame thoughts and deſigns in his mind.

And whence is this, but from hence, that men act with the ſame *vanity* of mind, are under the ſame *poor guidance* of their ſenſes, are as ignorant of their *true happineſs*, as great ſtrangers to their own nature, as when they firſt ſet out in life.

And

And is not this a plain reaſon for ſelf-denial? For to indulge ourſelves in our *natural tempers*, is to grow old in the follies of *childhood*.

XXIX. * Let us take another view of the diſorder of our nature, that we may ſee a ſtill greater neceſſity of not walking according to it.

When we ſee people *drunk*, or in a violent paſſion, we own they are ſo long in a ſtate of deluſion, thinking, ſaying, and doing irregular things, by the mere force of their blood and ſpirits. Here we all ſee the power of our bodies over our reaſon; and never ſuppoſe a man capable of judging or acting wiſely, ſo long as he is under the violence of *paſſion*, or heated by *drink*.

Now this is more or leſs the conſtant, *natural* ſtate of all mankind; who are by bodily impreſſions, and the agitations of the blood and ſpirits, in the ſame kind of *deluſion*, as men that are *drunk*, or in a *paſſion*, tho' not always in the ſame degree.

Sometimes the diſorder is more *violent* than at others. But it never ceaſes. Men are always in ſome *paſſion* or other; and this, even when it is not to that degree, as to be viſible to others, yet occaſions the ſame weakneſs of mind, the ſame diſordered imagination, and the ſame wrong apprehenſion of the nature of things.

A *ſilent envy*, a *ſecret vanity*, which no body ſees, diſorders our judgments in the ſame manner as more *violent* paſſions.

You may increaſe the *vanity* or *envy*, till it end in diſtraction, as it ſometimes happens. But then you may be ſure, it diſordered our underſtanding in ſome degree, long before it came to madneſs. All men therefore while, in a natural ſtate, reſemble thoſe who are drunk, or in a violent paſſion; having ſome paſſion or other that affects their ſpirits and diſorders their judgment, in the ſame manner tho' not in the ſame degree.

XXX. * Another circumſtance of drunkenneſs is this, that it gives us a taſte peculiar to it, ſo as to leave a dulneſs and indiſpoſition towards any thing elſe. An habitual drunkard has no pleaſure like that confuſed heat of thoughts that ariſes from inflamed blood. The repeating this ſo often has given him a turn of mind that reliſhes nothing but what relates to intemperance.

Now this is naturally the ſtate of all people, in ſome reſpect or other. There is ſomething has got hold of them, and given them a taſte for it, in the ſame manner that drinking has formed the taſte of a drunkard. All people are not intemperate; but all are under ſome habit that affects the mind in the ſame manner as intemperance.

Some people have indulged themſelves ſo long in *dreſſing*, others in *play*, others in *ſports* of the field,

field, others only in little *goſſiping ſtories*, that they are as much ſlaves to theſe, as the intemperate man to liquor.

Now we readily own, that a man who has enſlaved himſelf to drinking, has thereby rendered himſelf incapable of being a *reaſonable judge* of other happineſs; but then we do not enough conſider, that we are hurt in the ſame manner by any thing elſe that has taken hold of us, and given us a temper and turn of mind peculiar to it.

It is to as little purpoſe to talk of the happineſs of religion, to one that is fond of *dreſs*, or *play* or *ſports*, as to a drunkard; for the pleaſures of theſe particular kinds, make him as deaf to all other propoſals of happineſs, and as incapable of judging of them.

*A lady abominates a *ſot*, as a creature that has only the ſhape of a man: but then ſhe does not conſider, that perhaps, drunken as he is, he can be more content with the want of *liquor*, than ſhe can with the want of *fine cloaths*. And if this be her caſe, ſhe only differs from him, as one intemperate man differs from another.

Thus it appears, whether we conſider the nature, circumſtances or effects of drunkenneſs, that all mankind are more or leſs in the ſame ſtate of weakneſs and diſorder.

Hence alſo appears the abſolute neceſſity of denying our natural tempers and inclinations, and giving ourſelves up without reſerve to the light

and

and wiſdom of God; ſince by our natural corruption and ſlavery to the body, we are always under the power of its blind motions, and ſince all our inclinations and judgments, are only the judgments of heated blood, drunken ſpirits and diſordered paſſions.

XXXI. Every one ſees people in the world, whom he takes to be incapable of *ſober* judgments and *wiſe* reflections, becauſe he ſees they are full of themſelves, blinded with prejudices, violent in their paſſions, wild and extravagant in their imaginations.

Now when we ſee theſe, we ſhould reflect that we ſee ourſelves; for we as certainly ſee a *true repreſentation* of ourſelves, when we look at ſuch people, as we ſee a true picture of our ſtate when we ſee a man in the agonies of death.

You are not *dying* as this man is; but ſtill he ſhews you your own *true picture*. He ſhews you that your life is in the midſt of death, that you have in you the ſeeds of ſickneſs and mortality, and that you are only at a *little uncertain diſtance* from thoſe who are lying upon their laſt beds.

In like manner, you are not, it may be, in the ſame height of paſſion that another man is. You are at *ſome uncertain diſtance* from his ſtate. But if you fancy you are not corrupted with ſelf-love, not weakened by prejudices, not vain in your imaginations, not diſordered in your tempers, becauſe you are not in that *extremity* of

diſorder wherein ſome other people are; you think as abſurdly, as if you imagined yourſelf to be immortal, becauſe you are not in the *agonies* of death.

When therefore you ſee the violence of other mens paſſions, the folly of their tempers, and vanity of their minds, remember that you ſee ſo many plain reaſons for denying yourſelf, and reſiſting your own nature, which has in it the ſeeds of all the ſame evil tempers.

XXXII. From all this we may learn, (as was obſerved above) that abſtinence as to eating and drinking, is but a ſmall part of Chriſtian ſelf-denial: it being full as dangerous to indulge any evil temper, as to live in gluttony and intemperance.

* You think it ſhameful to be an *epicure*, or to be fond of *liquor*. You are very right: but then proceed a ſtep further, and think it as ſhameful to be fond of *dreſs*, or delighted with *yourſelf*, or to be fond of *dainties*: and that it is as great a ſin, to pleaſe any corrupt *temper*, as to pleaſe your *palate*. Remember, that blood heated with any *paſſion*, is like blood heated with *liquor*, and that the groſſneſs of gluttony is no greater a contrariety to religion, than the politeneſs of pride or vanity.

I have been the longer on this ſubject, trying to repreſent the weakneſs and corruption of our nature, becauſe ſo far only as we ſee this, can we

ſee

ſee the neceſſity of denying ourſelves. This would be needleſs, if we were wiſe and good; but if we ſee that our whole nature is in a diſorder, that our light is darkneſs, our wiſdom fooliſhneſs, our judgments as groſs and blind as our appetites; that our ſenſes govern us as they govern children; that our hearts are taken up with *gewgaws* and trifles; that the ſtate of our ſouls is a ſtate of error and deluſion, like that of drunkenneſs and paſſion.

If we ſee ourſelves in this true light, we ſhall ſee the great reaſon of Chriſtian ſelf-denial, of renouncing our whole ſelves, that we may ſee all things in God; that our hearts may be moved by a motion from him, and our wills and inclinations wholly directed by the light and wiſdom of his Spirit.

CHAP. IV.

THE neceſſity of divine grace, another general ground of ſelf-denial.

I. I come now to another great doctrine of our religion, namely, the *abſolute neceſſity of divine grace:* which is another conſtant reaſon for univerſal *ſelf-denial.*

The inviſible aſſiſtance of God's Spirit, by which we are diſpoſed to that which is good, and made able to perform it, is a confeſſed doctrine of Chriſtianity.

Our natural life is preſerved by ſome union with God, who is the fountain of life to all the creation; to which union we are altogether ſtrangers. We find that we are alive; but how or by what influence from God our life is ſupported, is a ſecret into which we cannot enter. It is the ſame thing with relation to our ſpiritual life; it ariſes from ſome *inviſible union* with God, or divine influence, which in this ſtate we cannot comprehend. Our bleſſed Saviour ſaith: *The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but canſt not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: ſo is every one that is born of the Spirit.* (†) This ſhews us how ignorant we are of the *manner* of the operations of the Holy Spirit. We may feel its effects, as we may perceive the effects of the wind, but are as much ſtrangers to the *manner* of its coming upon us, as we are to that *exact point*, from whence the wind begins to blow, or where it will ceaſe.

II. The Spirit of God is like the nature of God, too high for our conceptions, whilſt we are in theſe dark houſes of clay. But our bleſſed Saviour has in ſome degree helped our conceptions by the manner of his giving the Holy Spirit to the diſciples; *and he breathed on them, and ſaid unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt.* By this we are taught to conceive of the communications of the Holy Spirit, with ſome likeneſs to

(†) John iii. 8.

to breath, or wind; that its influences come upon us in ſome *manner*, like to a gentle breathing of the air. Repreſentations of this kind are only made in compliance with the weakneſs of our apprehenſions; which, not being able to conceive things as they are in their own nature, muſt be inſtructed, by comparing them to ſuch things as our ſenſes are acquainted with. Thus the *wiſdom* and *knowledge*, that is revealed from God, is compared to *light*; not becauſe light is a true repreſentation of the wiſdom of God; but becauſe it ſerves beſt to repreſent it to our low capacities. In like manner, the *influences* of the Holy Spirit, are ſet forth by *breathing* upon us; not becauſe *breath*, or *air*, or *wind*, are true repreſentations of the gifts of the Spirit, but becauſe they are the propereſt repreſentations that as yet fall within our knowledge.

III. But that which is moſt neceſſary for us to know, and of which we are ſufficiently informed in ſcripture, is the *abſolute neceſſity* of this divine aſſiſtance.

We are uſed to conſider thoſe only as *inſpired* perſons, who are called by God to ſome *extraordinary* deſigns. In this ſenſe there have been but few inſpired perſons; but inſpiration, as it ſignifies an *inviſible operation*, or *aſſiſtance* of God's Holy Spirit, is the privilege of all Chriſtians: in this ſenſe they are all *inſpired perſons*. *Know ye not*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *that your body is the*

temple of the Holy Ghoſt, which is in you? St. *John* likewiſe, *Hereby know we that he dwelleth in us, by the Spirit, which he hath given us. For as many as are led by the Spirit of* God, *are the Sons of* God, *and if any man hath not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his.* (†) From theſe, and many other paſſages it is plain, that the life which we now live, is a life in and by the Spirit of God; and that they are only Sons of God, who are led by this Spirit. Now this doctrine plainly proves the neceſſity of a conſtant ſelf-denial; for it muſt be neceſſary that we deny ourſelves all thoſe tempers, and ways of life, which may make God *withhold* his grace from us; and likewiſe all thoſe enjoyments and indulgences, which may make us *leſs able* and *leſs diſpoſed* to improve and co-operate with thoſe degrees of divine grace that are communicated to us.

IV. And ſeeing we are none of Chriſt's, if the Spirit of Chriſt be not in us; ſeeing we are only ſo far Chriſtians, as we are renewed by the Holy Ghoſt; nothing can be more neceſſary than that we conſider all our *tempers*, pleaſures, cares, deſigns and ways of life, whether they be ſuch as *ſuit* with the wiſdom and heavenly guidance of the Holy Spirit. This doctrine ſhews us to ourſelves in a *new point* of view, and may ſerve to teach us ſeveral truths, which we ſhould otherwiſe not ſo readily apprehend.

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(†) Rom. viii. 11.

When we are left to consider our duty with relation to the express commandments of God, there are many ways of life, which we think ourselves at liberty to follow, because they seem to be no plain breach of any express commandment. But we are to look to a farther rule, and to consider our pleasures and cares, our designs and endeavours, not only whether they are contrary to the letter of the law, but whether they are according to the Spirit of God; for if they are contrary to the Spirit of God, they are as truly to be avoided, as if they were contrary to some express commandment. For we are assured by scripture, that they only are the Sons of God, *who are led by the Spirit of* God; and none can be said to be led by the Spirit of God, but they whose lives are according to it, whose actions, cares, and pleasures, hopes and fears, are such as may be said to be guided by the Holy Ghost.

V. We are therefore to consider ourselves as *inspired persons*, that have no knowledge or wisdom, but what comes from God; and this wisdom will no longer dwell with us, than we act conformably thereto. So that we must not deceive ourselves in saying, where is the harm of such *indulgences*, or such *vanities* and idle *amusements?* But must consider, whether they are such as are conformable to a life that is to be directed by the Holy Ghost. In this manner must we examine all our ways of life, as well our cares

as our pleaſures. For unreaſonable cares, and unreaſonable pleaſures, are equally contrary to the wiſdom of the Holy Spirit, and equally ſeparate us from him. People often think their deſigns and diverſions innocent, becauſe they are not *ſinful* in their nature. But they ſhould alſo conſider, whether they are not *vain* and *fooliſh*, and *unſuitable* to the condition of a Chriſtian. For a life of *folly* and *vanity*, and *trifling deſigns*, is no more living by the *Spirit of* God, than a life of *groſs ſins* is keeping the *commandments*. So that the ſafeſt rule to judge of our actions by, is to conſider them with relation to that Spirit, by which we are to be guided. Is this deſign or this diverſion according to the wiſdom of the Spirit of God? Am I in theſe things improving the ſecret inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt? Am I here governed by a wiſdom from above? Are theſe ways ſuch as I can truly ſay, that I am led into them by the Spirit of God? Do I allow myſelf in them, becauſe they ſerve to ſet forth the glory of God? Are they good proofs that the Spirit of God dwelleth in me; and that by thus ſowing to the Spirit, I ſhall of the Spirit reap everlaſting life? This is the rule by which Chriſtians are to regulate their thoughts, words, and actions; for we are called by God to act by the motions of his Holy Spirit, and to make no other uſe of ourſelves, or the world we are in, than ſuch as is conformable to that dignity of life and ſtate of glory to which we are called. The Spirit

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of our religion is to be the ſpirit of our lives, the conſtant principle of all our tempers and inclinations, which is to render us reaſonable, and wiſe and holy in all our progreſs through the world.

VI. * Tis acknowledged by all, that a life of *intemperance* and *debauchery*, makes us dead and ſenſeleſs of religion: but then it is not enough conſidered that the *vanity* of the mind, an underſtanding buſied in *trifles*, an *impertinent courſe of life*, will as certainly produce the *ſame effect*. If our underſtanding is full of fooliſh imaginations, if we are devoted to trifles, religion can gain no entrance. A man may be ſo earneſt in *picking ſtraws*, as to have no leiſure to think of his ſalvation; nor any more inclination to it, than one that is conſtantly in *drink*.

Thus poor *amuſements*, vain *arts*, uſeleſs *ſciences*, impertinent *learning*, falſe *ſatisfaction*, a wrong turn *of mind*, a ſtate of *idleneſs*, or any the vaineſt *trifles* of life, may keep men at as great a diſtance from true religion, as the debaucheries of intemperance.

VII. * *Titius* is temperate and regular: but then he is ſo great a *mathematician*, that he does not know when Sunday comes: he ſees people going to *church* as he ſees others going to *market*; he goes on ſtudying, meaſuring, and calculating, and may as well be called a *merchant* as a *Chriſtian*.

All doctrines of religion are disagreeable to *Philo*; he avoids them as he avoids *party:* now what is the reason of it? It is not because he is *debauched* and *intemperate.* But he is a *virtuoso*, devoted to polite *literature.* His soul is extended to all the *curiosities* in the world, and thinks all time to be lost that is not spent in the search of *shells*, *urns*, *inscriptions*, and *broken pieces of pavements*. This makes the concerns of *eternity* seem small things in his eyes, fit only for the enquiry of *narrow*, *little*, and *unpolite* souls.

Eusebius would read prayers *twice* a day in his *parish*; he would be often with the poor and sick, and spend much time in charitable visits; he would be wholly taken up with the *care* of souls, but that he is busy in studying the *old grammarians*, and would fain *reconcile* some differences amongst them before he dies.

VIII. *Lycia* might be pious; but that she is too *easy*, *gay*, and *chearful*, to admit of care of any kind. She can no more *repent*, than she can be *out of temper*, and must be the same *sparkling*, *chearful* creature in the *church*, as in the *playhouse*. She might be capable of understanding the misery of human nature, and the necessity of the comforts of religion; but that she is so happy every time she is *dressed.*

Matrona is old, and has been these *fifty years* eating and drinking, sleeping and waking, dressing and undressing, *paying* and *receiving visits.*

She

She has no prophaneneſs; and, if ſhe has no piety, it is owing to this, that ſhe never had a *ſpare half-hour* to think about it. She envies her daughters, becauſe they will *dreſs* and *viſit* when ſhe is dead.

* *Publius* goes to *church* ſometimes, and reads the ſcripture; but he knows not what he reads or prays, his head is ſo full of politics. He is ſo angry at *Kings* and Miniſters of State, that he has no time or diſpoſition to call himſelf to account. He has the hiſtory of all *parliaments*, *elections*, *proſecutions*, and *impeachments*, and dies with little or no religion, through a conſtant fear of popery.

Siccus has been all his life long *building* and *pulling down*, making *canals* and *ditches*, raiſing *walls* and *fences*. People call him a good man, becauſe he employs the poor: *Siccus* might have been a *religious* man, but that he thought *building* was the chief happineſs of a rational creature. He is all the week amongſt *dirt* and *mortar*, and ſtays at home on *Sundays* to view his contrivances. He will die more contentedly, if his death does not happen whilſt ſome *wall* is in building.

IX. I have mentioned theſe ſeveral *characters* to ſhew, that it is not only *prophaneneſs*, *debauchery*, and *open vices*, that keep men from the impreſſions of true religion; but that the mere *play-things* of life, impertinent *ſtudies*, vain *amuſe-*

ments, falſe *ſatisfactions*, idle *diſpoſitions*, will produce the ſame effect. A *wrong* turn of mind, *impertinent cares*, a ſucceſſion of the *pooreſt trifles*, if they take up our thoughts, leave no more room for true piety than groſs ſenſuality.

X. We ſee even in worldly matters, that if we propoſe any thing to a man, when he is in the purſuit of ſomething elſe, he hardly hears or underſtands us; we muſt ſtay for a ſeaſon of more leiſure and indifference, till his thoughts and paſſions are at reſt.

Now this holds much ſtronger in matters of religion. Its doctrines are neither heard nor underſtood, becauſe it always finds us in the purſuit of *ſomething elſe*. It matters not what this *ſomething elſe* is; the mind is equally employed wrong, and ſo not in a condition to like, or at leiſure to liſten to any other happineſs. If you were to propoſe the ſame truths to a man in another ſtate, when wearineſs or diſappointment has made him give up all deſigns, or when ſickneſs or the approach of death ſhews him that he muſt act no longer in them, they would have quite another effect upon him; then the great things of religion appear great indeed. He *feels* their whole weight, and is amazed he did not ſee them always in the ſame manner. Now it is the great end and deſign of *ſelf-denial* to put a ſtop to the follies of life, that our ſouls may quietly conſider, and fully comprehend the truths which

which come from God; that our hearts being at liberty from a croud of fooliſh thoughts, may be ready to obey and co-operate with the *inſpirations* of that Spirit, which is to lead and quicken us in all holineſs; that *death* and *judgment*, *heaven* and *hell*, may make as deep impreſſions upon our minds in the middle of our lives, as at our laſt hour; that we may be as wiſe and prudent as *ſick* and *dying* men, and live with ſuch apprehenſions as moſt people die with; that we may ſee the vanity of the world, the miſery of ſin, the greatneſs of eternity, and the want of God, as they ſee it who ſtand upon the brink of another world.

XI. This is the great and happy work of ſelf-denial, to awaken us into a true knowledge of ourſelves, and ſhew us who, and where, and what we are. Till then our life is but a *ſleep*, a *dream*, a mere ſucceſſion of ſhadows; and we act with as little reaſon as a child that is pleaſed with blowing about a *feather*. We muſt therefore not only deny our wicked inclinations, but alſo all our follies, impertinences, and vain ſatisfactions: for, as plain and known ſins harden and corrupt, ſo impertinences and vain ſatisfactions delude and blind our hearts, and render them inſenſible of our real miſery, or true happineſs.

XII. We are true members of the kingdom of God; when the kingdom of God is within us; when the ſpirit of religion is the ſpirit of

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our lives; when ſeated in our hearts, it diffuſes itſelf into all our motions; when it is the principle of all our thoughts and deſires, the ſpring of all our hopes and fears; when we like and diſlike, ſeek and avoid, mourn and rejoice, as becomes thoſe who are born again of God. And this is the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, to give us a *new underſtanding*, a *new judgment*, temper, taſte, and reliſh, new deſires, and new hopes and fears. But ſo far as we nouriſh any fooliſh paſſion, indulge any vanity of mind or corruption of heart; ſo far we *reſiſt the graces* of God's Holy Spirit, and render ourſelves *indiſpoſed* to reliſh and improve his ſecret *inſpiration*.

XIII. Chriſtians are therefore not only to conſider themſelves, as men that are to act by a principle of *reaſon*, but as ſpiritual beings who have a higher principle of life within them, and are to live by the *wiſdom* and *inſtructions* of the Spirit of God.

As reaſonable men would do every thing that tended to ſtrengthen or improve their reaſon, ſo Chriſtians ought to practiſe every thing that can ſtrengthen or preſerve their union with the Spirit of God. For as a man without reaſon has but the *figure* of a man; ſo a Chriſtian without the Spirit of God, has but the *form* of a Chriſtian. Here therefore we muſt fix all our care, and concern, that we may remove all hindrances of divine grace; that we may be truly ſpiritual

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in all our ways and deſigns, and indulge no tempers that may leſſen our union with the Spirit of God.

XIV. Some perſons will perhaps refrain from *grief*, when they find that it hurts their *eyes*; they will avoid *paſſion* and *anger* if it ends in pains of the head; but they would do well to conſider that theſe tempers are to be abſtained from, upon much greater accounts. Paſſion may diſorder our bodies, waſte our ſpirits, and leave pains in our *heads*; but it leaves greater marks of injury in our better parts, as it throws us into a ſtate of madneſs, and *baniſhes* the Holy Spirit of peace, and gentleneſs, and *prepares* us for the ſuggeſtions of the ſpirit of darkneſs. *Grief* may hurt our *eyes*, but it much more hurts our *ſouls*, as it ſinks them into a ſtate of gloom and darkneſs, which *expels* and *quenches* the Spirit of God; for light may as well unite with darkneſs, as the Spirit of God dwell with the gloomy dulneſs and horror of ſtupid grief. What I have obſerved of theſe two paſſions, ought to be concluded of every other *paſſion* and *temper*; we are to conſider it as it *ſuits* with, or *reſiſts* that new Spirit, by whoſe motions we are to be preſerved in a ſtate of holineſs.

XV. Now ſeeing this *newneſs* of ſpirit is the whole of religion; we muſt fear and avoid all *irregularity* of ſpirit, every *unreaſonable temper*, becauſe

becauſe it hurts us in our principal part, and makes us *leſs capable* of the graces, and *leſs obedient* to the motions of God's Holy Spirit. We muſt labour after a ſtate of peace, and thankfulneſs, free from the folly of vain hopes, idle fears, and falſe anxieties, that our ſouls may be diſpoſed to rejoice in the comforts, and advance in the graces of the Holy Ghoſt.

XVI. And with what *care* and *exactneſs* we are at all times to conduct ourſelves, is fully ſet forth in the following words: *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the uſe of edifying, that it may miniſter grace unto the hearers; and grieve not the Holy Spirit of* God, *whereby you are ſealed unto the day of redemption.* (†) That we may not here miſtake what is meant by *corrupt communication*, the apoſtle adds; *but that which is good to the uſe of edifying, that it may miniſter grace unto the hearers.* So that it is *a converſation that does not edify*, and profit the hearers, that the apoſtle condemns as *corrupt*. And let it be obſerved that the apoſtle does not prohibit this kind of converſation becauſe it is *uſeleſs*, and impertinent; but for a reaſon of the utmoſt conſequence, that we may *not grieve the Holy Spirit of* God. This ſhews us that we Chriſtians are to govern ourſelves by no leſs a rule, than a *conformity* to the Spirit of God; that we are not only

(†) Epheſ. iv. 29.

only to deny ourſelves vain and fooliſh actions, but alſo idle and unedifying diſcourſe, and conduct ourſelves in all our behaviour, with ſuch a ſpirit of wiſdom and purity as may make the Holy Ghoſt *delight* to dwell in us. Such a wiſdom as is not occaſionally exerciſed in this or that place, or at ſet times; but is always in being, and conſtantly diſpoſing us to thoughts, words and actions ſuitable to it.

XVII. A man may be ſaid to have ſome regard for religion, who is *regular* at places of divine worſhip; but he cannot be reckoned of a *religious ſpirit*, till it is his Spirit in every place and on every occaſion, till he lives and breathes by it, and thinks, and ſpeaks, and acts according to its motions.

A man may frequent *meetings for mirth*; but yet, if when he is out of them, he gives himſelf to peeviſhneſs, chagrin and dulneſs, no one will ſay ſuch a man is of a *chearful ſpirit*. It is eaſy to make the application: if we are only attendants at *places* of religion; if when we are out of thoſe places, we are of another ſpirit, I don't ſay proud or covetous, but vain and fooliſh: if our actions are ſilly, and our converſation trifling and impertinent, our tempers vain and worldly, we are no more of a *religious ſpirit*, than a dull peeviſh man is of a *chearful ſpirit*, becauſe he is regular at ſome ſet meetings for *mirth*.

XVIII.

XVIII. * Religion is not ours till we live by it; till it is the religion of our thoughts, words and actions; till it goes with us into every place; fits uppermoſt on every occaſion; and forms and governs our hopes and fears, our cares and pleaſures. He is the religious man who watches and guards his Spirit, and endeavours to be always in the temper of religion; who worſhips God in every place: who is as fearful of fooliſh thoughts, irregular tempers, and vain imaginations at one time as at another; who is as wiſe and heavenly at *home*, or in the field, as in the *houſe of* God. For when once religion has got poſſeſſion of a man's heart, and is become as it ought to be, his ruling temper; it is as agreeable to ſuch a one in all places, and at all times, to ſpeak and act according to its directions, as 'tis agreeable to the *ambitious* man, to act according to the motions of ambition. We muſt therefore take it for granted, that if we are not religious in our converſation, or common temper, we are not religious in our hearts; we may have a *formality* of religion at certain *times* and *places*, but we are not of a *religious ſpirit*.

XIX. We ſee every body ſpeaking and converſing according to their *ſpirit* and temper: the covetous, the ambitious, the vain and ſelf-conceited, have each of them their proper language ſuitable to their ſpirit and temper; they are the *ſame* perſons in all places, and always talk

talk like themſelves. If therefore we could meet with perſons of a truly religious ſpirit, we ſhould find them like men of other tempers, the ſame perſons in *all places*, and always talking and acting like themſelves. We ſhould find them living by one temper, and converſing with men with the ſame ſpirit that they converſe with God; not one thing in one place, and another in another; not formal and grave at a *funeral*, and mad and frantic at a *feaſt*; not liſtening to wiſdom at *church*, and delighting in folly at *home*; not angry with one fooliſh thing, and as much pleaſed at another; but ſteady and uniform in the ſame wiſe and religious temper.

XX. Farther, as we are not of a *religious ſpirit*, till it orders all our converſation; ſo it is to be obſerved, that if our converſation is vain and fooliſh, it keeps us in a ſtate incapable of religion, by *grieving* the *Holy Spirit*. And as we can do nothing without the Spirit of God, as he is our *breath*, our *life*, our *light*, and our *ſtrength*; ſo, if we live in ſuch a way as *grieves* and *removes* this Holy Spirit from us, we are as branches that are broke off from the tree, and muſt periſh in the deadneſs and corruption of our nature. Let this therefore teach us to judge rightly of the ſin and danger of *vain*, *unedifying* and *corrupt* communication; it is not the ſin of *idleneſs* or *negligence* only; it is not a *pardonable infirmity*; it is not a *little miſtake* in ſpiritual wiſdom; but it is a

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ſin that ſtands between us and the *tree* of life; that oppoſes our whole happineſs, as it *grieves* and *ſeparates* the Holy Spirit from us. Let this alſo teach ſome people the reaſon why they are ſo *dead* and *ſenſeleſs* of religion: they are not guilty of groſs ſins; they have an averſion to *cheating* and *falſeneſs*; but at the ſame time have no more feeling or ſenſe of religion than mere *reprobates*. Now the reaſon of it is this; they live in ſuch an *impertinence* of converſation; their communication is ſo conſtantly upon *ſilly* and *vain* ſubjects; and they are ſo fond of thoſe who have the talent of converſing in the ſame manner, that they render themſelves *unfit* for the reſidence of the Holy Spirit. We don't ſeem to apprehend, either how much *good* or how much *evil* there is in converſation; I believe it may be affirmed that the greateſt inſtructions, and the greateſt corruptions proceed from it. For mens common converſation and ordinary life teach much more effectually than any thing they ſay or do at ſet times or occaſions.

When a clergyman preaches, he is for the moſt part conſidered as doing that which all clergymen do, whether *good* or *bad*. But if he is the ſame wiſe and virtuous man in his communication, that he is in the *pulpit*; if his ſpeech be always *ſeaſoned with ſalt*, that it may *miniſter grace unto the hearers*; if the *common* actions of his life be viſibly governed by a ſpirit of piety: ſuch a one will be heard with reverence on the *Sunday* for

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what he says and does all the week. And on the contrary, if a *clergyman*, when he comes out of the *pulpit*, is but like other men; as *irregular* in his tempers; as *trifling* in his conversation; as *eager* in his diversions; and as *vain* in his designs; he will mightily lessen his power over the hearts of his hearers.

A father now and then gives his son virtuous advice, and the son perhaps would be much the better for it; but that he never hears him talk virtuously, but when he is giving him advice; this makes him think, that he is then only acting the part of a *father*; as when he is buying him *cloaths*, or putting him out to an *employment*. Whereas if he saw his father's *ordinary life* and conversation to be under the rules of religion; and his every day temper, a temper of piety; 'tis very likely that he would be won into an imitation of it.

XXI. It is our communication, our *ordinary temper* and *common life*, that affects other people, that either hardens them in sin, or awakens them to a sense of piety. Let therefore all *clergymen*, and *masters* and *mistresses* of families look carefully to themselves; let them consider, that if their *ordinary life*, their communication be *vain*, *impertinent*, and *unedifying*, they are not only in a corrupt state of heart, but are guilty of corrupting and perverting the hearts of those that belong to them. Let them not think that they have sufficiently discharged their duty, by seeing

ſeeing that thoſe who relate to them, have their proper inſtructions; for it is next to impoſſible for ſuch inſtructions to have their proper effect againſt the example of thoſe we converſe with. If a *clergyman plays*, and *drinks*, and *ſports* with his flock in the week days: let him not wonder if he preaches them aſleep on *Sundays*. If a *father* is *intemperate*; if he *ſwears*, and converſes *fooliſhly* with his friends; let him not wonder that his children cannot be made virtuous. It is therefore the neceſſary duty of all Chriſtians, in all ſtates of life, to look carefully to their *ordinary behaviour*, that it be not the means of poiſoning and corrupting the hearts of thoſe they converſe with. They muſt conſider, that all the follies and impertinences of their ordinary life and converſation have the guilt of deſtroying ſouls; and that the blood of thoſe whom their follies have deſtroyed, will be required at their hands.

XXII. A miſtreſs whoſe converſation is a daily proof to her *maids*, that ſhe is governed by a ſpirit of piety in all ſhe ſays and does: whoſe life is a continual viſible labour to *work out her ſalvation with fear and trembling*, is a bleſſing to all that ſtand about her. She communicates happineſs even to thoſe who are born of her ſervants; they will be educated in piety, becauſe their parents learnt what piety was in waiting on ſuch a *miſtreſs*.

XXIII. A

XXIII. A good-natured, *drinking, ſleeping, playing, ſwearing maſter*, is a curſe to thoſe who tend upon him; they are led into all irregularities, by following his ſteps, and are ſent into the world hardened in follies, and inſenſible of religion, by having lived with ſuch a *maſter*. This ought carefully to be conſidered by all Chriſtians, as a mighty encouragement to ſtrictneſs of behaviour; that as a *holy* converſation intitles us to a reward for other peoples virtues; ſo an *evil communication* makes us liable to a puniſhment for other mens ſins. For we can neither live well nor ill to ourſelves alone; but muſt of neceſſity do either good or harm to others by our manner of converſation. This is one great reaſon why a vain corrupt communication does ſo *grieve* the Holy Spirit; becauſe it is ſo infecting an evil, and does ſo corrupt the manners of thoſe we converſe with.

CHAP. V.

THE neceſſity of divine grace, obligeth all Chriſtians to a conſtant purity and holineſs of converſation; wherein is ſhewn the great danger and impiety of reading vain and impertinent books.

I. I have ſhewn that the *neceſſity of divine grace* is a mighty argument for an univerſal exactneſs

actneſs of life and converſation. I come now to ſpeak farther to that remarkable branch of it: *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the uſe of edifying, that it may miniſter grace to the hearers; and grieve not the Holy Spirit of* God, *whereby ye are ſealed to the day of redemption.* Now if we are to let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth, that we may not grieve *the holy Spirit of* God; it follows that we are to deny ourſelves the entertainment of *corrupt*, *impertinent*, and unedifying books. For if vain and idle words are not to proceed out of our mouths, we muſt be under the ſame neceſſity of not letting them come into our hearts.

II. If we would know what books are to be avoided as corrupt and grieving the Holy Spirit, we muſt look back to the rule of our communication; for as that communication is there ſaid to be *corrupt* that does not *edify and miniſter grace* to the hearers; ſo muſt we look upon all thoſe books as corrupt, which do not *edify* and *miniſter grace* to the readers. Now this book-entertainment is as certainly forbidden by the apoſtle, as cheating is forbidden by the *eighth* commandment: for if I am not to ſay fooliſh and impertinent things myſelf, becauſe ſuch a communication *grieves* the Holy Spirit of God; I am as certainly forbid the reading the corrupt and impertinent ſayings of other people.

The

The books which moſtly corrupt our hearts, and fill us with a ſpirit of folly, are ſuch as almoſt all the world allow themſelves to read; I mean books of *wit* and *humour*, *romances*, *plays*, and other productions of the *poets*. Thus a *grave orthodox* old gentleman, if he hears that his *niece* is very good, and delights in reading, will fill her cloſet with volumes of *plays* and *poems* on *ſeveral occaſions*, on purpoſe to encourage her to ſpend her time well. There is not perhaps a more ſurpriſing infatuation in the conduct of Chriſtians, than this.

III. There is a proper time for every thing that is lawful to be done: now, can you tell when it is proper for a Chriſtian to meditate upon theſe books?

There is a time when our hearts are more than ordinarily raiſed towards God; when we feel the joys and comforts of religion, and enjoy a peace that paſſes all underſtanding. Now I ſuppoſe reaſon will not allot this time for the diverſion of ſuch books.

There is a time, when either thro' the neglect of duty, remorſe of mind, worldly vexations, bodily tempers, or the abſence of God's Spirit, we ſink into dejection and dulneſs, grow burthenſome to ourſelves, and can hardly think of any thing with ſatisfaction. Now if reaſon is to judge, this is of all times the moſt improper for ſuch entertainment. For if there is any time

more proper than another to think upon God, 'tis when we are *in heavineſs*.

When we are *ſick* it is time to fly to the *phyſician*; when we are *weary*, it is a proper time to *reſt*: now there is the ſame fitneſs in having recourſe to God and religion, when we are under any dejection of mind. For it is not more the ſole property of light to diſpel darkneſs, than it is the ſole property of religion to relieve all uneaſineſs. *Is any one afflicted*, ſays the apoſtle, *let him pray*. Now this we are to look upon, not only as a wiſe advice of ſomething that is very good to be done; but as a ſtrict command that leaves no choice of doing any thing in the ſtead of it.

It is as abſolute a command as if he had ſaid, *Hath any one ſinned, let him repent*. For an application to God is as much the one thing to be done in the hour of trouble, as repentance is the one thing to be done in time of ſin.

IV. You ſeem to make times of dulneſs the occaſion of reading thoſe books, by ſaying that you only read them to *divert* your ſpirits. But that which you take to be a reaſon for reading them, is a ſtrong objection againſt it. For it is never ſo improper to read thoſe books, as when you want to have your ſpirits raiſed, or your mind made eaſy to itſelf. For it is the higheſt abuſe you can put upon yourſelf, to look for eaſe and quiet in any thing, but in right apprehenſions

henſions of God's providence. And it is a ſin againſt the *whole nature* of religion, not to make it the whole meaſure and reaſon of all your peace and enjoyment in every occurrence of life.

If you muſt amuſe yourſelf with a volume of *plays*, becauſe you are laid up with a *broken leg*, or have *loſt a friend*, you are as far from wiſdom as a child that is to be made quiet with *a rattle*, and as far from religion as thoſe who worſhip *idols*; nay, to ſeek to ſuch things for relief and refreſhment, is like applying to the devil *in diſtreſs*. A man that drinks *drams* every time he is dull or uneaſy, is a *wiſe*, *prudent*, and *ſober* man, if compared to the Chriſtian that in ſeaſons of dejection has recourſe to *wanton* wit, and *prophane* rant: he deſtroys the purity of his mind much more effectually, than the other deſtroys the health of his body.

Do you think that in *great diſtreſſes*, it is proper to ſeek comfort in God; but that in *little troubles*, any thing that can divert is as well? Nay, ſurely if God is our ſufficient comfort in great diſtreſſes, he muſt be our beſt relief in thoſe that are ſmaller. Unleſs it can be ſaid, that the truths of religion are able to make us bear martyrdom with content, but not great enough to make us eaſy in *little* trials.

V. Beſides, to ſeek for relief in fooliſh books, is not only applying to a falſe remedy, but is alſo deſtroying the chief power of religion. For as

religion has no power over us but as it is our happineſs; ſo far as we neglect, or refuſe to make uſe of its comforts, ſo far we deſtroy its power over us. For it can no otherwiſe be the ordinary care of our lives, than by being our ordinary happineſs and conſolation in all the changes of life. A Chriſtian therefore is to make his Chriſtianity his comfort, not only in times of *great trial* and ſufferings, but in all the *leſſer vexations* of life, that by this means every little occaſion of grief or diſquiet may be an occaſion of his being more affected with religion, and more ſenſible of its true comforts.

VI. On the contrary, if *men* will make themſelves happy as children are made happy, not by conſidering the nature of things, but by a *change of amuſements*, they muſt alſo expect to have the vexations of children, and be, like them, laughing and crying at they know not what, all the the days of their life: for children are only eaſily vexed becauſe they are eaſily pleaſed; and it is certain that they who can be pleaſed with things of no value muſt in the ſame degree be liable to be diſpleaſed at them. And as this is the true ſtate of childhood: ſo whoſoever is in this ſtate, whatever his *age* may be, his *office*, or his *dignity* in life, is yet as truly in the ſtate and folly of childhood, as he that is but four years old. Take an inſtance or two: a child whoſe heart is half broken at ſome misfortune, may perhaps be made eaſy with a picture of a *huntſ-*

man

man and a *pack of hounds*; but if you would comfort the father that grieves for his eldeſt ſon, the *hounds* muſt all be *alive*; they muſt *cry*, and *run*, and follow a *hare*; and this will make the father as eaſy as the picture did the child.

A mother comforts her little girl with a *pack of cards* that are finely *painted*: by and by ſhe wants to be comforted herſelf: ſome great calamity has happened to her. Now you muſt not think to comfort her with *painted cards*, or building houſes with them; her grief is too great, and ſhe has been too long a *mother* to be pleaſed with ſuch things. It is only *ſerious ombre* that can dry her eyes, and remove ſorrow from her heart.

VII. I might eaſily multiply inſtances of this kind; but theſe are ſufficient to ſhew us, that perſons of *age* and *authority* often differ only from children, as one child may differ from another. This is the true reaſon why human life is ſo full of complaint; why it is ſuch a *mixture* of ridiculous pleaſures, and vain diſquiets, namely, becauſe we live in an entire ignorance of the nature of things, never conſidering why we are pleaſed with this, or diſpleaſed with that, nor any more appeal to religion to direct our judgments, than children appeal to reaſon to form their tempers. For if we will only play, or lull ourſelves into repoſe, as children are rocked to ſleep, it is not to be wondered at, if like them we *cry* as ſoon as we are awake: and the reaſon

why people, *ſeemingly* religious, are ſubject to the ſame *dulneſs* and *peeviſhneſs*, to the ſame *vexations* and variety of griefs that other people are, is this, becauſe they make no more uſe of their religion on thoſe occaſions, than other people: they don't ſo much as intend to keep themſelves *eaſy*, *thankful* and *chearful*, by making religion the *meaſure* and *ſtandard* of all their thoughts and judgments, in all the common chances of life, any more than thoſe do, who have no thoughts about religion.

VIII. Suppoſe a perſon had *lame* feet, and *bad* eyes, and that he had an *oil*, that was an infallible cure for them both, when applied to both; if you ſaw him only uſing it for his *eyes*, you would not wonder that it had not cured his *feet*; you would know that his anointing his *eyes* could only cure his *eyes*; and that there was no ground to expect that his *feet* ſhould be any better, till he anointed his *feet*: and all this for this plain reaſon, becauſe things, however good in themſelves, can have no farther effect than as they are applied. Now it is juſt thus in religion. If a man places it only in *public worſhip*, he attends public worſhip; it operates ſo far. But why muſt you wonder, that he is not of a *wiſe*, *virtuous*, and *religious* temper, in all the actions of his ordinary life? Is not this wondering why the *oil* has not cured a man's *feet*, when

when he has never applied it to them, but only to his *eyes?*

IX. * When the regular churchman as plainly makes religion the *meaſure* of his ordinary life, as he makes it the *rule* of his going to *church*; when he as directly uſes it to this purpoſe, as a man anoints his eyes, who would be cured by anointing them; then you will ſee him as different in his *ordinary life* from other people, as different in his pleaſures and griefs, in his cares and concerns, as he is different from them in *forms* and regularity of worſhip. But till men do this; till they apply the principles of religion to all the actions of *ordinary life*; till they make it the *meaſure* of all their daily tempers, their joys and fears; till they think there is as much piety in being *wiſe* and *holy* in their common tempers, as in being *devout* at church; as much ſin in being vainly pleaſed and fooliſhly vexed, as in neglecting the divine ſervice; till they thus directly apply religion to common life, as a man applies a remedy to the part he would have cured; it is no more to be expected that it ſhould make them religious in common life, than that an *oil* applied to our *eyes* ſhould cure our *feet*.

It is our ordinary life, which we think is thus left to ourſelves, that makes religion ſo inſignificant in the world: it lies by like a *remedy* that is *unapplied*; it has no effect becauſe it is uſed only

as a *formal thing* that has its duties at *ſet times* and occaſions: whereas it ſhould be uſed and conſidered as the *rule* and *reaſon* of all our judgments and actions; as the *meaſure* of all our cares and pleaſures; as the *life* of our life, the ſpirit of our ſpirit, and the very form and eſſence of all our tempers. It is to be in us, like a *new reaſon* and judgment of our minds; that is to reaſon and judge of every thing we do, and to preſide over and govern all the motions of our hearts. *Is any one merry*, ſaith the apoſtle, *let him ſing pſalms: Is any afflicted, let him pray.* This is religion in the apoſtle's account; it is not only an attendance at the public worſhip, but it is the *ruling habit* of our minds; ſomething that devotes us wholly to God, that allows of no mirth in our common life, but a mirth proper for the brethren of Chriſt, a mirth that can expreſs itſelf in praiſe and thankſgiving, that allows of no other cure for grief or vexation than what is to be had from recourſe to God. And indeed what can be more abſurd, than for a Chriſtian ever to act in any other conſideration than as a Chriſtian? He is ſenſeleſs to a degree of madneſs when he indulges a thought, or a motion of his heart; when he either takes a pleaſure, or relieves a grief; where he cannot ſay I do this as a Chriſtian, as ſuitable to that ſtate in which Chriſtianity has placed me.

X. * We reckon a man sufficiently *mad* that fancies himself a *king*, and governing his subjects, at the same time that he is tied on a bed of *straw*: now a *Christian* repeats every day, *I believe the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting*; he thanks God *for the redemption of Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory*. Yet at the same time, in this state of *greatness*, he fancies himself in a *thousand wants and miseries*: he cries and labours, and toils for a happiness, that has no existence but in his *own imagination*; he fancies himself a *being* that is to be made happy with sauces and ragous, with *painted cloaths* and *shining diamonds*, he is grieved and fretted like a child at the loss of a *feather*; and must be diverted, as they are, with *shows* and *plays*, and imaginary scenes of rant and nonsense. Now is not such a one *mad?* Does he not know as little of his *state*, as the man in straw who fancies himself a king? But for a Christian, in times of dulness or vexation, to seek relief in foolish amusements, in the loose, wild discourses of *plays*, when he should *acquaint himself with God, and be at peace*, is a degree of madness that exceeds all others; it is acting as contrary to the nature of things, as if a man that had lost the use of his *limbs*, should chuse to comfort his lameness with *painted shoes*, when he might have the use of his feet restored. For the consolations of religion relieve uneasiness and trouble, as a *lame*

man is relieved when his *limbs* are reſtored; they conquer grief, not by cheating and deluding the weakneſs of our minds, but as the reſurrection conquers death, by reſtoring us to a new and glorious life.

XI. From theſe reflections I hope it ſufficiently appears, that the reading vain and impertinent books is no matter of indifferency; but that it is juſtly to be reckoned amongſt our *greateſt corruptions*; that it is as unlawful as *malice* and *evil ſpeaking*; and is no more to be allowed in any part of our life.

Reading, when it is an exerciſe of the mind, upon wiſe and pious ſubjects, is, next to *prayer*, the beſt improvement of our hearts; it enlightens our minds, collects our thoughts, calms and allays our paſſions, and begets in us wiſe and pious reſolutions; it is a labour that does ſo much good to our minds, that it ought never to be employed amiſs; it enters ſo far into our ſouls that it cannot have a little effect upon us. Reading and meditation is that to our ſouls, which food and nouriſhment is to our bodies; ſo that we cannot do ourſelves either a *little* good, or *little* harm, by the books that we read.

XII. But perhaps you think it is a *dull taſk* to read only religious and moral books: but when God is your happineſs; when you are not afraid of the joys of eternity, you will think it a dull

taſk

taſk to read any other books. Don't fancy therefore that your heart is right, tho' you had rather read books upon other ſubjects; for it is there that you are to charge your *dullneſs*: religion has no hold of you; the things of eternity are not the concerns of your mind; it is *dull* and *tireſome* to you to be *wiſe* and *pious*; and that makes it a dull taſk to read only books that treat upon ſuch ſubjects. When it is the care of your ſoul to be humble, holy, pious, and heavenly minded; when you know any thing of the guilt and miſery of ſin, or feel a real deſire of ſalvation, you will find religious books to be the greateſt feaſt and joy of your mind.

XIII. You perhaps will ſay that you have ſo much ſpare time for reading, that you think you need not employ it at all in reading good books. It may be ſo; you may have alſo more time than you need devote to offices of *charity*; but will you thence conclude, that you may then do things *contrary* to charity, and indulge yourſelf in *ſpight* and *miſchief*?

* If you have every day more time than you can employ in reading, meditation and prayer; if this time hangs upon your hands, and can not be turned to any advantage; let me deſire you to go to *ſleep* or *pick ſtraws*; for it is much better to do this, than to have recourſe to corrupt and impertinent books. Time loſt in *ſleep*, or in *picking ſtraws*, is better loſt than in ſuch exerci-

ſes of the mind. Conſider farther, that *idle* and *ſpare time* calls for the greateſt care and watchfulneſs; ſo that to have recourſe then to evil and impertinent books, is like inviting the devil becauſe you are alone. If you could read ill books when you are in haſte, or in a hurry of other matters, it would do you much leſs harm than to read them becauſe your time hangs upon your hands. That very ſeaſon which you take to be an excuſe for ſuch *reading*, is the ſtrongeſt argument againſt it, becauſe evil thoughts and vain ſubjects have twice the effect, and make double impreſſions when they are admitted at times of leiſure and idleneſs.

XIV. Conſider again to what a miſerable ſtate you are reduced, when you are forced to have recourſe to fooliſh books to get rid of your time. Your fortune perhaps has removed you from the neceſſity of labouring for your *bread*; you have been politely educated in ſoftneſs; you have no trade or employment to take up your time; and ſo are left to be devoured by corrupt paſſions and pleaſures. Whilſt poor people are at hard labour; whilſt your ſervants are drudging in the meaneſt offices of life; you, oppreſſed with *idleneſs* and *indulgence*, are relieving yourſelf with *fooliſh* and *impertinent* books; feeding and delighting a diſordered mind with *romantic* nonſenſe, and poetic follies. If this be the effect of riches and fortune, only to expoſe people to the

power

power of disordered passions, and give them time to corrupt their hearts with madness and folly, well might our Lord say, *Woe unto you that are rich!*

* When you see a *poor creature* drudging in the meanest offices of life, and glad of the dirtiest work to get his *bread*, you are apt to look upon him as a *miserable wretch*; it raises a mixture of pity and contempt in you; but remember, that every time you see such a person, you see a more reasonable creature than yourself, and one that is much more *nobly employed* than you are. He is acting *conformably* to the state of human life, and bearing a hard part with patience; he is doing a work which, mean as it is, will be looked upon as done unto the Lord; whilst you, idling in *softness* and *pleasures*, are unable to bear your time, unless it be stolen away from you by folly and impertinence. Fancy that you saw a *patient Christian*, old, broken and crooked, with carrying burthens all his life; fancy that you saw another Christian lolling in *state* and *softness*, and making every day a day of *vanity* and *foolish reading*; which of them do you think is most likely to die in the hands of good *angels*, and be carried into *Abraham*'s bosom?

XV. * But, after all, what a vain imagination is it to think that you have any such thing as *spare time?* Is there any time for which you are not accountable to God? Is there any time which God

God has so left to your own disposal that you may sacrifice it to the indulgence of vain tempers, and the corruption of your heart? You can no more shew this than you can shew, that all your time is your own. To talk therefore of *spare time*, is to talk of something that never did nor ever will belong to any Christian. You may have a *spare time* from this or that labour, or necessity, you may abate or change any *particular exercise*, you may take this or that refreshment; you have all these *spare times* from particular actions, but you have no *spare time* that releases you from the laws of Christianity, or that leaves you at liberty not to act by the principles of religion and piety.

* You have *spare time* to refresh yourself: but this is to be governed by the same wisdom, as the time that is spent in cares and labours. For your recreations and pleasures are only lawful as far as they are directed by the same wisdom with your cares and labours. If therefore the providence of God has placed you above the necessity of labouring for your livelihood, you must not think that you have so much *spare time* to spend, as you please, but that you are certainly called to some *other labour*. Great part of the world is doomed to toil and slavery; they have it not in their power to chuse any other way of life, and their labour is therefore an acceptable service to God, because it is such as their state requires. Happy are you therefore, if you knew your

your happineſs, who have it in your power to be always doing the *beſt things*; who, free from labour and hardſhips, are at liberty to chuſe the *beſt ways* of life, to ſtudy all the arts of *ſelf-improvement*, to practiſe all the ways of doing good, and to ſpend your time in all the nobleſt inſtances of piety, humility, charity and devotion! Bleſs God then, not beeauſe you have *ſpare time*, for that you have none, but that you have time to employ in the beſt ways that you can find; that whilſt others are oppreſſed with burdens, and worn out with ſlavery, you have time to think upon the greateſt and beſt of things; to enlighten your mind, to correct the diſorder of your heart, to ſtudy the laws of God, to contemplate the wonders of his providence, to convinee yourſelf of the vanity of the world, and to delight your ſoul with the great and glorious things which God has prepared for thoſe that love him. This is the happineſs of being free from labour and want, not to have *ſpare time* to ſquander away in *vanity* and *impertinence*, but to have *ſpare time* to ſpend in the ſtudy of wiſdom, in the exerciſe of devotion, in the practice of piety, in all the ways and means of doing good and exalting our ſouls to a ſtate of *Chriſtian perfection*.

XVI. * It is a doctrine of ſcripture, and highly agreeable to reaſon, *That unto whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall much be required*. Conſider

der therefore that a life of leiſure and freedom from want and hardſhips is as much as can well be given you in this world, as it is giving you an opportunity of living wholly to God, and making all the parts of your life uſeful to the beſt purpoſes. As ſure therefore as it is a ſtate, that has ſo many advantages that furniſhes you with ſo many means of being eminent in piety, ſo ſure it is, that it is a ſtate from which God expects fruits that are worthy of it. Had it been your lot to labour in a *mine*, or ſerve under ſome cruel maſter, you muſt have ſerved as unto God; and in ſo doing you had finiſhed the work which God had given you. But as you are free from all this, you muſt look upon yourſelf as God's *ſervant*, as called to chuſe that way of labouring and ſpending your time, which may moſt promote that which God deſires to be promoted. God has given you liberty to chuſe, but it is only that you may have the bleſſedneſs of chuſing the *beſt ways* of ſpending your time. Though therefore you are at liberty from ſervile and mean labour, yet you are under a neceſſity of labouring in all good works, and making all your time, and fortune, and abilities ſerviceable to the beſt ends of life. You have no more time that is your own, than he has that is to live by conſtant labour; the only difference betwixt you and him is this, that he is to be diligent in a poor, ſlaviſh labour, that oppreſſes the body, and dejects the mind; but you in a *ſervice that*

is

is perfect freedom, that renders your body a *fit temple* for the Holy Ghoſt, and fills your ſoul with ſuch light, and peace, and joy, as is not to be found in any other way of life.

XVII. Do you think that a *poor ſlave* would diſpleaſe God by refuſing to act in that painful drudgery that is fallen to his ſhare? And do you think that God will not be more diſpleaſed with you, if you refuſe to act your *full part* in the beſt of labours, or neglect that happy buſineſs of doing good, which your ſtate of life has called you to? It is expected that *poor people* ſhould make a right uſe of their condition, and turn all their labour into a ſervice unto God? And do you think you are not obliged to make a proper improvement of your condition, and turn all your *reſt*, and *eaſe*, and *freedom* from labour, into ſervice unto God? Tell me therefore no more that you indulge yourſelf in idle amuſements, in vain, corrupt, and unedifying books, becauſe you have *ſpare time?* For it is abſolutely falſe to ſay that you have any ſuch thing; it is ſaying, that becauſe God has given you *ſpare* time from ſervile labour, time for all the inſtances of a holy and heavenly life; therefore you preſume to throw it away in idleneſs and impertinence.

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